DOCTOR JOHNSON'S MISTRESS

With portraits by Sir Joshua Reynolds

DR. JOHNSON'S MRS. THRALE

MRS. PIOZZI
(MRS. THRALE)

After painting by
SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS

DR. JOHNSON'S
MRS. THRALE

AUTOBIOGRAPHY, LETTERS AND LITERARY REMAINS OF MRS. PIOZZI, EDITED BY A. HAYWARD, Q.C., NEWLY SELECTED AND EDITED, WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES, BY J. H. LOBBAN

WITH TWENTY-SEVEN PORTRAITS IN COLLOTYPE FROM PAINTINGS BY SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS AND OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS

T. N. FOULIS
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TO

L. M. Q. C.

WHO SUGGESTED THE WORK

AND MADE OF IT A PLEASURE

PREFACE

THE contents of this volume are selected from the second edition, published in two volumes in 1861, of Mr. Hayward's *Autobiography, Letters, and Literary Remains of Mrs. Piozzi.* The first of these volumes consists of the editor's biographical and critical essay, and the only portions of it reprinted here are the *Marginal Notes* and extracts from *Thraliana* which Mr. Hayward incorporated in his essay and did not reproduce in his text. I have restored these to their proper place, and have endeavoured to make the book more serviceable by prefixing to the Marginalia the relevant quotations from the texts. In the former edition only page references were given to a particular edition of Johnson's works. The contents of this volume are, I hope, independently intelligible. The changes in the grouping of the materials, and the addition of subject-headings, notes, and a detailed index, have been made with the same object in view, namely, to render more accessible and attractive a book full of value and interest to all students of the period.

In the brief introduction I have drawn freely on

Mr. Hayward's elaborate essay, of which the limits of the present volume forbade the inclusion. For two other reasons the omission may be justified. A considerable portion of the essay is of a controversial character, and deals with matters no longer *sub judice*. And no one, I think, would deny that some of the most valuable pages in it are those containing the extracts that Mr. Hayward had the good fortune to present for the first time from the unpublished MSS. of Mrs. Piozzi. These, as I have explained, are inserted in the text of the present edition.

J. H. L

LONDON,
October 28, 1909.

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INTRODUCTION

ALTHOUGH *Autobiographical Memoirs* may seem rather an ambitious title for the notes recorded by Mrs. Piozzi, the sense of unfitness will be less and less felt as the reader comes under the influence of their cumulative effect. For in nearly everything she wrote Mrs. Piozzi found opportunity for the display of an agreeable egotism. Her briefest marginal retorts to Boswell are as full of biographical value as her more elaborate entries in her *Thraliana*. Certainly the rather pompous opening pages are the least characteristic in the volume, and the reader who refuses to see the unintentional humour in the solemn chronicle of the Salusbury pedigree would do well to pass without more ado to the cut and thrust of the marginal notes on Wraxall and Boswell and Johnson. Her readers' pleasure and her own reputation both gain by the controversies that were thrust upon her. Had her life been always as happy as it was seemingly prosperous, Mrs. Piozzi's personality would cut a very unimportant figure in our literary annals. Her name, we imagine, might in that case have won a footnote immortality along with that of

Lady Miller, the presiding genius of the Bath-Easton Vase. But the "accursed wits," as she calls them, would not have it so. She lived to face an unexampled storm of obloquy and slander, and whatever view may be taken of her conduct, it must be admitted that the crisis revealed in her unsuspected reserves of courage and dignity and wit.

Hester Lynch Salusbury was born at Bodvel, Caernarvonshire, 16th January, 1741. Of her early life we obtain some significant records in her memoirs. Her candour in speaking of her parents and husband and children is always unflinching. Her mother, Hester Salusbury Cotton, made a love match, the plain-spoken daughter tells us, with "her rakish cousin, John Salusbury of Bachygraig," Flintshire. "He, unchecked by care of a father who died during the infancy of his sons, ran out the estate completely to nothing." We hear later of the father's "desperate engagement with some quacks and projectors who pretended to find lead on his encumbered estate," and of his "quarrelling and fighting duels and fretting his friends." Presently Lord Halifax found occupation for John Salusbury by sending him out as one of the pioneer colonists of Nova Scotia, and Hester and her mother were left, "*sine pane* almost, I believe, certainly *sine nummo*," to stay with Grandmother Cotton at East Hyde, near Luton, and with Sir Robert Salusbury Cotton (Hester's uncle) at Lleweney Hall. At East Hyde in particular Hester Salusbury had a very merry time, teaching her grandmother's "four great ramping war-horses" to come to her hand "for a lump of sugar." By her own admission she was

something of a spoilt child. She was her parents' "joint plaything" and her uncles' "fondled favourite." "Education was a word then unknown as applied to females," but Hester was taught French so well that she was reckoned "half a prodigy." To an aunt she owed instruction in Latin, Italian, and Spanish. "Study was my delight, and such a patroness would have made stones students."

In 1761, George Montagu Dunk, second Earl of Halifax, became Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, and John Salusbury once again shared his patron's fortunes. It was during the father's absence in Ireland that Uncle Thomas set about match-making. "My uncle had been to town for a night or two, and returned to tell us what an excellent, what an incomparable young man he had seen, who was, in short, a model of perfection, ending his panegyric by saying that he was a real sportsman." Hester was disposed to laugh (her second marriage also began in laughter), but Sir Thomas looked very grave. Next day Henry Thrale made his appearance and laid immediate siege to the affections of his future mother-in-law. Sir Thomas's chaplain cherished hopes of Hester's fortune[1] and promptly reported the arrival of Thrale to her father, who hastened back from Ireland vowing that his daughter "should not be exchanged for a barrel of porter." John Salusbury, however, died suddenly in December, 1762, and ten months later "Mr. Thrale deigned to accept my undesired hand." It is in these words that Mrs. Thrale

[1] A charge of £5000 on the Welsh estate was left her by her father, and her uncle added as much again. See p. 41.

describes the first days of her married life. She speaks of herself as being left "to conciliate as I could a husband, who was indeed much kinder than I counted on to a *plain girl*, who had not one attraction in his eyes, and on whom he never had thrown five minutes of his time away in any interview unwitnessed by company, even till after our wedding-day was done."

These words are ominous of the story that follows. It is unnecessary to trace it in detail, as it is fully recorded in the pages of this volume. The general conception of Mrs. Thrale is that of a woman who made a brilliant match and was enabled by her husband's liberality to dispense splendid hospitality at Streatham Place. To read Mrs. Thrale's memoirs brings the conviction that all this was but the silver lining to a cloud that encompassed the whole of her life with Henry Thrale. There is no reason for discrediting her evidence. On the contrary, it bears every *prima facie* semblance of truth. She lays herself open to many charges. She may on good grounds be accused of hardness and flippancy and vanity. But it is scarcely possible on any fair view of the evidence to deny that she had a passion for justice. The same experiences that hardened her made her broad-minded and tolerant. She could see the humour in the libels against her, and she was generous in her estimate of her assailants. This quality in her, by a not very inexplicable irony, has led many of her critics to belittle her womanliness. But she is at least entitled to the quality of her defect, and that, I take it, compels acceptance of the

general accuracy of her rather pitiful description of her first marriage. Her praise of Mr. Thrale comes obviously from her head and not from her heart. She acknowledges his generosity generously, but her warmest laudation is only a cold appraisement, and in a score of unguarded passages she lets slip the secret of her unhappiness. The hostess of Streatham Place never had much honour in her own house. Her guests appear to have taken their cue from the master of the house, and Mr. Thrale's gallantry never reached the length of home. She submitted to such treatment at her own table that we are fain to accuse her of a want of dignity and self-respect. But we have her own explanation—a halting confession of her fear of her husband and of her conviction that he would quarrel with no guest in support of his wife. As the mother of his heir, she tells us bitterly, she enjoyed a short-lived distinction, but Harry Thrale died in 1776 and left a gap that the five surviving daughters out of eleven did nothing to fill. "'Daughters,' said Johnson warmly, 'he'll no more value his daughters than ——.'" And that was precisely how Thrale did value both his daughters and their mother. Mrs. Piozzi's references to her daughters are the most unpleasing pages of her memoirs. It is often difficult to remember that the cold allusions to "the ladies" refer to her own children. We must conclude that to the children of her loveless marriage Mrs. Thrale was a cold and unsympathetic mother. To what extent she was blameworthy is a more difficult question. Her influence and authority at home were constantly

undermined, and when she married Mr. Piozzi, there seemed to be a general conspiracy among the friends of her great days to add fuel to the doubts and suspicions of her children. To her daughters, as to her husband, we find Mrs. Thrale striving to be just and impartial. "They are five lovely creatures to be sure, but they love not me. Is it my fault or theirs?"

Before we pass from Mrs. Thrale to Mrs. Piozzi there are two matters to note—Mrs. Thrale's keen participation in her husband's business affairs, and the presence of Dr. Johnson at Streatham. From the first Mrs. Thrale proved a loyal and keen-witted wife, and her loyalty is all the more laudable as she learned that Mr. Thrale's chief motive in choosing her as his wife was her willingness to live for a certain part of the year in the unfashionable quarter of Southwark. As a business man Thrale was apparently credulous and nervous, and his shrewd wife helped him over many crises and vetoed some foolish speculations. She was equally loyal and successful in helping her husband in his candidature for Parliament. The extent to which her pride had suffered is made evident by her relief when she had finally sold the "brew-house" to "a knot of rich quakers." "I have by this bargain purchased peace and a stable fortune, restoration to my original rank in life, and a situation undisturbed by commercial jargon, unpolluted by commercial frauds, undisgraced by commercial connections. They who succeed me in the house have purchased the power of being rich beyond the wish of rapacity, and I have procured

the improbability of being made poor by flights of the fairy, speculation. . . . 'Tis over now, tho', and I'll clear my head of it and all that belongs to it; I will go to church, give God thanks, receive the sacrament and forget the frauds, follies, and inconveniences of a commercial life this day." It is characteristic of Mrs. Thrale that in the midst of all this no doubt genuine emotion of relief, she kept an open eye to the humour of Johnson's activity as an executor. She viewed him with a twinkle as he bustled about in the unfamiliar surroundings of the brewery, and has left a delightful picture of his joy at signing large cheques. She corroborates Lord Lucan's entertaining account, and, as Mr. Hayward noted, almost reproduces Johnson's classic description of the brewery as "the potentiality of becoming rich beyond the dreams of avarice."

At the beginning of 1765 Johnson made his first appearance at the hospitable house at Streatham. He was introduced by Arthur Murphy, and the other guest of honour was James Woodhouse, the shoemaker poet, one of Mrs. Montagu's lions, whom the Thrales captured for the evening. Johnson occasionally gratified the Queen of the Blues with a finely turned compliment, but her shoemaker genius he treated as lightly as he did her own superfluous labours in the defence of Shakespeare. There were only two words to describe this attempt at literary patronage, and Johnson used them without any search for euphemistic equivalents. He said it was "all vanity and childishness." But the important result of the dinner was, as Mrs. Thrale records, that "we liked each other so

well that the next Thursday was appointed for the same company to meet, *exclusive of the shoemaker* [the italics are ours], and since then Johnson has remained till this day our constant acquaintance, visitor, companion, and friend." To this account by Mrs. Thrale of their first meeting the best footnote is found in the last letter she received from her illustrious guest. That letter is one of the distressing series reprinted in the appendix to this volume. It represents Johnson's second and kinder thoughts. He had realised the harshness and unfairness of his reception of the news of Mrs. Thrale's second marriage, and the author of the sentence that follows is the Johnson whom we all love for his great humanity and his splendid sincerity. "I wish that God may grant you every blessing, that you may be happy in this world for its short continuance, and eternally happy in a better state; and whatever I can contribute to your happiness I am very ready to repay, for that kindness which soothed twenty years of a life radically wretched."

That the honour conferred by Johnson's presence in her house was not without attendant trials may be granted by the most fervent Johnsonian. No one could be more delightful company than the dictator when he chose, but the early struggles of his life in London, which occupy so small a space in Boswell's memoir, left permanent marks on his manners and on his temper. And when a modest and long delayed prosperity overtook him, his acknowledged supremacy as a king of clubmen tended to aggravate his love of domineering. This is a side of Johnson's character

that one is often apt to overlook. It yielded such excellent "copy" to Boswell that we forget that what is a feast of wit to us was often a bitter enough morsel for some of his victims to chew. The strokes that agreeably tickled Boswell left wounds that rankled in Goldsmith. And there was only one Boswell, preordained for his great mission by a signal genius, an invulnerable skin, and an infinite capacity for taking snubs. Of this necessary equipment Mrs. Thrale had very little. To say that her long submissiveness was, like Boswell's, due to a form of self-interest is a patently inadequate theory. It is true only to the extent that it recognises her genuine literary enthusiasm and her appreciation of the honour of Johnson's friendship. Two other qualities at least were necessary, and these Mrs. Thrale had in no common measure—a keen sense of humour and a large tolerance. Sufficient instances are on record to show that, when it was absolutely necessary for the maintenance of dignity, Mrs. Thrale could remind Johnson of her position as hostess as neatly as Burke could vindicate the independence of the members of the Club. That she did this so seldom redounds to her good sense, her humour, and her loyalty to her husband. Some of her confessions in *Thraliana* sharply remind us that the attitude of Johnson towards women was that of Swift and Addison rather than that of Steele. Addison's banter and "civil leer" are not unfaithfully reproduced in his playful patronage of Fanny Burney. To his hostess his company must always have been of the nature of a "fearful joy," as no one could fore-

tell the moment when the table in the most literal sense would be set on a roar.

Mr. Thrale died in 1781, and immediately rumour was busy in finding a second husband for his rich widow, now in her fortieth year, and with five daughters surviving of a family of twelve. Lord Loughborough, Sir Richard Jebb, George Selwyn, Johnson, and Mr. Piozzi were freely mentioned as likely candidates for her hand. Just a year after Thrale's death, she tells us that "every man that comes to the house is put in the papers for me to marry. In good time I wrote to-day to beg the *Morning Herald* would say no more about me, good or bad." And a few days later she entered in her diary a spirited reply to the scandal-mongers. "Somebody mentioned my going to be married t'other day, and Johnson was joking about it. 'I suppose, Sir,' said I, 'they think they are doing me honour with their imaginary matches, when, perhaps, the man does not exist who would do me honour by marrying me!' This, indeed, was said in the wild and insolent spirit of Baretti, yet 'tis nearer the truth than one would think for. A woman of passable person, ancient family, respectable character, uncommon talents, and three thousand a year, has a right to think herself any man's equal, and has nothing to seek but return of affection from whatever partner she pitches on. To marry for love would therefore be rational in me, who want no advancement of birth or fortune, and *till I am in love*, I will not marry, nor perhaps then." This is a true and dispassionate statement of her position, and one that

disperses the cloud of slander and misrepresentation that was soon to fall on her. It is perfectly certain that no marriage she could have made would have escaped the attentions of the school for scandal.

The manner in which every fact of the case was turned to Mrs. Thrale's discredit is seen in Madame D'Arblay's well-known account of the evening party at her father's house in St. Martin's Street, when Mrs. Thrale "softly arose, and stealing on tip-toe behind Signor Piozzi, who was accompanying himself on the piano-forte to an animated *arria parlante*, with his back to the company, and his face to the wall, she ludicrously began imitating him by squaring her elbows, elevating them with ecstatic shrugs of the shoulders, and casting up her eyes, while languishingly reclining her head; as if she were not less enthusiastically, though somewhat more suddenly, struck with the transports of harmony than himself." The passage from which these words are taken was written, it may be noted, more than half a century after the event, and interest chiefly attaches to the reflection with which it closes. "When the catastrophe (*sic*) was known, this incident, witnessed by so many, was recollected and repeated from coterie to coterie throughout London with comments and sarcasm of endless variety." It is difficult now to see in the incident the slightest ground for ill-natured talk. Madame D'Arblay herself admits that the party was a dismal failure, and her description of its boredom goes far to extenuate Mrs. Thrale's ill-mannered diversion. But any story was good enough as evidence against Mrs. Piozzi, and times

innumerable this one has been cited as a proof of her want of respect for the man she was later to marry.

Gabriel Piozzi, whom Macaulay refers to as an "Italian fiddler," was one of the many distinguished foreign musicians who enjoyed Dr. Burney's hospitality at St. Martin's Street. According to her own account, Mrs. Thrale made his acquaintance first at Brighton in 1780 on the introduction of Fanny Burney, who pronounced him "a companion likely to lighten the burden of life to me, as he was just a man to my natural taste." During that summer, while sheltering at Brighton from the commotion of the Gordon Riots, the Thrales saw much of Mr. Piozzi, and on their return to town he became a familiar figure at Streatham. In a letter to Mrs. Thrale, six months after her husband's death, Johnson refers to Piozzi in a manner showing no disapprobation of the close friendship of which he was evidently now aware. "Piozzi, I find, is coming in spite of Miss Harriet's prediction, or second sight, and when *he* comes and *I* come, you will have two about you that love you; and I question if either of us heartily care how few more you have." Inconsistency is a charitable term to apply to Johnson's conduct in telling Mrs. Thrale later that by her marriage to this friend she would forfeit her fame and her country.

The most important documents respecting the much discussed marriage are contained in the subsequent pages, and it is unnecessary here to add to the mountain that has been piled up over this biographical molehill. Mrs. Piozzi reveals her

inmost thoughts in her diary, and with its help Mr. Hayward had little difficulty in demolishing the insubstantial pageant of Macaulay's rhetoric. The "Italian fiddler" was a man of great personal charm, distinguished in his profession, and so successful as to be able to leave his wife a considerable fortune. By infinite patience and tact he overcame all calumny, and in a very difficult position he acted consistently with the most scrupulous honour. His return to England disarmed his own and his wife's traducers, and it is with pardonable satisfaction that Mrs. Piozzi records the approaches of her shamefaced critics. "Piozzi could not talk to Johnson," she once admitted, and he appears not to have shared his wife's literary interests. But one thing is very noticeable in her memoirs and letters, and that is the gratitude and affection with which she always refers to him. So far from regretting the earlier glories of Streatham, she refers to them only as a foil to her newly-found happiness. The indictment against her used to run that she had married a foreigner, a musician, a Roman Catholic, and had deserted five children. For the first three terms we might now, judging of the wisdom of the act by the happiness of its event, substitute the word gentleman. As regards her children we have to admit that Mrs. Piozzi was a failure. It has to be remembered, however, that they were all possessed of an ample fortune, and that in the eldest daughter, who was twenty-two at the time, the others found the guardian of their choice. That the marriage should have been the subject of comment at the

time causes no astonishment. It was the price of her social prominence. Our astonishment is caused only by the virulence and bitterness of it all, and our sympathy goes out to the victim of so gross an assault on the liberty of the subject. Johnson's first letter is also not difficult to understand. In his old age and ill health he keenly felt the threatened disturbance of the fixed habits of his life, and sorrow and anger and self-pity led him for the moment to distort his loss into Mrs. Thrale's crime. To defend his first letter seems a poor service to Johnson, as it is implicitly condemned by the altered tone of his second. The bitter "I once was, Madam, most truly yours" is replaced by "I am, with great affection." The letter that comes between these two is perhaps the best thing that ever came from Mrs. Thrale's pen, and no one was better fitted to recognise its sincerity and dignity than the writer of the *Letter to Lord Chesterfield.*

The twenty-five years that closed with the death of Mr. Piozzi in 1809 were the happiest of her life. Slander and misrepresentation assailed her at various times, but in most of these instances the attacks were either the result of individual malice or the natural penalty of authorship. It was left to a fellow-countryman of her husband to pursue the shameful tactics to a shameful end. Her most lukewarm friends had sufficient national spirit left them to reprobate the slanders of the brilliant and foul-mouthed Baretti. Even to that gifted ruffian Mrs. Piozzi is scrupulously just. It is a signal proof of her large toleration that even to her the humour was

plainly apparent of Baretti's professed indignation at the indignity of her marriage. He had done all in his power to set her daughter against her; and when he found himself referred to in some uncomplimentary pages of her *Anecdotes of Johnson*, his revenge took a form of which it is only possible to say that we are glad that an English pen did not write it and sorry that an English magazine printed it. But Mrs. Piozzi rated it at its true value. "It hurts little," she said. What hurt her more was the idea that the Burneys were behind the attack. This idea was pretty certainly due to malicious gossip. But Mrs. Piozzi had a very penetrating insight into character, and her comments on her friend, Fanny Burney, are very illuminative. "Dear Burney," she writes, speaking of her visit immediately preceding her second marriage, "who loves me *kindly* but the world *reverentially*, was, I believe, equally pained as delighted with my visit," and her words are strikingly confirmed by Miss Burney's admission in her *Diary* that the delight of the visit was "mixed with bitters the least palatable." There are only two other attacks to which we need refer. Mrs. Piozzi necessarily had to pay a penalty for daring to write about Johnson. Her *Anecdotes* inspired Walpole with a number of witticisms, and led to one of Peter Pindar's best remembered skits, "Bozzy and Piozzi," of which the following is an example.

BOZZY

"Well, Ma'am! since all that Johnson said or wrote,
You hold so sacred, how have you forgot

To grant the wonder-hunting world a reading
Of Sam's Epistle, just before your *wedding:*
Beginning thus, (in strains not form'd to flatter)
'Madam,
'*If that most ignominious matter*
'*Be not concluded*'—
Farther shall I say?
No—we shall have it from *yourself* some day,
To justify your passion for the *Youth*,
With all the charms of eloquence and truth."

MADAME PIOZZI

"What was my marriage, Sir, to *you* or *him?*
He tell me what to do!—a pretty whim!
He, to *propriety*, (the beast) *resort!*
As well might *elephants preside* at *court.*
Lord! let the world to *damn* my match *agree;*
Good God! James Boswell, what's *that world* to *me?*
The folks who paid respects to Mistress Thrale,
Fed on her pork, poor souls! and swill'd her ale,
May *sicken* at Piozzi, nine in ten—
Turn up the nose of scorn—good God! what then?
For *me*, the Dev'l may fetch their souls so *great;*
They keep their homes, and *I*, thank God, my meat.
When they, poor owls! shall beat their cage, a jail,
I, unconfin'd, shall spread my peacock tail;
Free as the birds of air, enjoy my ease,
Choose my own food, and see what climes I please,
I suffer only—if I'm in the wrong:
So, now, you prating puppy, hold your tongue."

The other incident is of much later date, and carries us forward to the year 1813, when William Augustus Conway made his first appearance at Covent Garden. Conway (the name was the stage substitute for Rugg) enjoyed a short-lived popularity

as an actor, in London and in the provinces, but his sensitiveness to hostile criticism drove him to America, where five years later he committed suicide. His handsome appearance and fine declamation are attested by Macready, but it would seem that his height made him awkward and self-conscious. Hazlitt has many references to his ungainliness, and in one of them, a criticism of Conway as Romeo in 1814, he likens him to a young elephant, and concludes with the question, "*Quere*, Why does he not marry?" Mrs. Piozzi had formed a warm attachment for the young actor, and did her utmost to promote his professional success. In her will he was specially mentioned. Two days before her death she had made him a present of a hundred pounds, which Conway, in a letter full of grateful reference to his "late revered friend," insisted on restoring to the estate.

In 1843 a book appeared called *Love Letters of Mrs. Piozzi, written when she was eighty, to William Augustus Conway*, and the anonymous editor asserted that the seven letters were copied from the originals in America. This publication requires no comment beyond the statement that its authenticity is doubtful, and that its contents afford no support for the hypothesis suggested in the catch-penny title.

There is entire agreement in all the records of her life as to the marvellous vivacity of her old age. "A wonderful old lady," says Moore; "faces of other times seemed to crowd over her as she sat—the Johnsons, Reynoldses, etc.: though turned eighty, she has all

the quickness and intelligence of a gay young woman." A year before her death she celebrated her eightieth birthday by giving a supper and dance to more than six hundred guests at Bath, and she herself opened the ball with her nephew, Sir John Salusbury. Fanny Burney remarks on the same trait in her entry in her *Diary* respecting Mrs. Piozzi's death. "I have lost now, just lost, my once most dear, intimate, and admired friend, Mrs. Thrale Piozzi, who preserved her fine faculties, her imagination, her intelligence, her powers of allusion and citation, her extraordinary memory, and her almost unexampled vivacity, to the last of her existence. She was in her eighty-second year, and yet owed not her death to age nor to natural decay, but to the effects of a fall in a journey from Penzance to Clifton. . . . She was in truth a most wonderful character for talents and eccentricity, for wit, genius, generosity, spirit, and powers of entertainment." To the same observer we owe an interesting comparison between Mrs. Piozzi and the Queen of the Blues. "More bland and more gleeful than that of either of them [Mrs. Vesey and Mrs. Montagu], was the personal celebrity of Mrs. Thrale. Mrs. Vesey, indeed, gentle and diffident, dreamed not of any competition, but Mrs. Montagu and Mrs. Thrale had long been set up as rival candidates for colloquial eminence, and each of them thought the other alone worthy to be her peer. Openly therefore when they met, they combated for precedence of admiration, with placid though high-strained intellectual exertion on the one side, and an exuberant pleasantry

or classical allusion or quotation on the other; without the smallest malice in either."

Mrs. Piozzi had no desire to be numbered among the Blues, against whom she directs some pungent sarcasm. The contrast between her and Mrs. Montagu was sharper than Madame D'Arblay's high-flown diction indicates. Mrs. Piozzi had a delicate sense of humour, and doubtless enjoyed to the full the ludicrous airs and pompous solemnity of Mrs. Montagu. In accomplishments she probably excelled all the Blues with the exception of Elizabeth Carter, the best scholar and the finest lady of them all. Johnson described her learning as "that of a schoolboy in one of the lower forms," but her own books disprove the accuracy of this criticism. Much of her learning was superficial, but she had read widely and brought to her reading shrewd and independent judgment and a remarkable memory. That her wit and her humour did not always prevent her descent to the ridiculous is shown by her complacent references to her share in the Della Cruscan fatuity. The side of Mrs. Piozzi's character that least attracts is a concomitant of her wonderful vitality. It is her boast that she never grew old, but it is her defect that in some ways she never grew up. We tire of the archness of "your poor little H.L.P.," and occasionally discover in her letters insincerity as well as twaddle. On the literary side she disarms criticism by her frankness and her unpretentiousness. As a hostess, and it is in that capacity that Mrs. Piozzi's name will last in our literary history, she was singularly gifted. She admitted herself that

she was too strong-featured to be beautiful, but she had a clever and attractive face, and her charm of manner was rooted in real kindness of heart. Lovers of Johnson will always owe her homage for the sunshine she brought into his life. It is a debt owing to her without any deduction.

DR. JOHNSON'S MRS. THRALE

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIRS

I HEARD it asserted once in a mixt company that few men of ever so good a family could recollect, immediately on being challenged, the maiden names of their four great-grandmothers: they were not Welsh men. My father's two grandames were Bridget Percival, daughter to a then Lord Egmont, and Mary Pennant of Downing, great-aunt to the great naturalist. My mother claimed Hester Salusbury, heiress of Lleweney Hall, as one of *her* grandmothers by marriage with Sir Robert Cotton; Vere Herbert, only daughter of Lord Torington, was the other.

The Salusbury pedigree is, indeed, perpetually referred to by Pennant in the course of his numerous volumes. It begins, I remember, with Adam de Saltzburg, son to Alexander, Duke and Prince of Bavaria, who came to England with the Conqueror, and in 1070 had obtained for his valour a faire House in Lancashire, still known by the name of Saltsbury Court. I showed an abstract of it to the Heralds in office at Saltzbourg, when there; and they acknow-

ledged me a true descendant of their house, offering me all possible honours, to the triumphant delight of dear Piozzi, for whose amusement alone I pulled out the schedule. You [1] will find a modest allusion to the circumstance in page 283 of the Travel Book, 2nd vol.[2]

Among my immediate ancestors, third, fourth, or fifth, I forget which, from this *Father Adam*, was Henry Salusbury surnamed the Black; who having taken three noble Saracens with his own hand in the first Crusade, Cœur de Lion knighted him on the field, and to the old Bavarian Lion (see *Retrospection*, p. 116 [3]) which adorned his shield, added three crescents for coat armour. On his return the king permitted him to settle where he married—in Wales. He built Lewenney Hall, naming it Lew,—the Lion, and an ny,—for us; and set a brazen one upon its highest tower.

Among our popular Cambrian ballads, is one to the honour of this hero; still known to the harpers by name of Black Sir Harry. The civil wars of York and Lancaster called into public notice an immediate descendant of this warrior. His name, which also was *Henry*, stood recorded on a little obelisk, or

[1] Sir James Fellowes (1771–1857), an eminent physician, who was one of Mrs. Piozzi's executors. The memoirs were written at his request.

[2] *Observations and Reflections made in the course of a Journey through France, Italy, and Germany*, 1789.

[3] A work of Mrs. Piozzi, entitled *Retrospection; or, Review of the most striking and important Events, etc., which the last Eighteen Hundred Years have presented to the view of Mankind*, 1801.

rather cippus, by the roadside at Barnet, where the great battle was fought *so* long, that I remember my father taking me out of the carriage to read it when I was quite a child. He had shewn mercy to an enemy on that occasion, who looking on his device or imprese, flung himself at his feet with these words:—

Sat est prostrasse Leoni.

Our family have used that Legenda as motto to the coat armour ever since.

I guess not why this man was a Yorkist. The other party was natural to the inhabitants of North Wales, where the proud Duke of Somerset had married a daughter of his to the son of Owen Tudor by the Princess Katherine of France; another of whose sons, Fychan Tudor de Beraine, married *his* son to Jasper the Earl of Pembroke's daughter. These were immediate parents to the father of Katherine de Berayne by Constance d'Aubigné, dame d'Honneur to Anne de Bretagne. She brought him this one only child, an *heiress*, who was ward to Queen Elizabeth, and in her fifteenth year married, with her Majesty's consent, to Sir John Salusbury, of Llewenney Hall, eldest of fourteen children. After his demise fair Katherine gave her hand to Sir Richard Clough, the splendid merchant, mentioned in a note to *Retrospection*, whose daughter inherited Bachygraig, and married Roger Salusbury, youngest brother of Sir John, first husband to her mother. He quarrelled with the House of Lleweney, tore down the Lion and set it on his wife's seat called Bachygraig, where it stood, newly gilt by Mr. Piozzi, two years ago (1813).

My father was lineally descended from this pair, and died possessed of dear old Bachygraig, while Sir John Salusbury's family soon finished in a daughter Hester, who, marrying Sir Robert Cotton of Combermere, gave him, and all her progeny by him, the name of Salusbury Cotton. She was immediate grandame to my dear mother; and thus in your little friend the two families remain united.

Will it amuse you to be told that Katherine de Berayne, after Sir Richard Clough's death, married Maurice Wynne, of Gwydir, whose family and fortune merged in that of the Berties? He was not, however, her last husband. She wedded Thelwall, of Plasyward, after she was quite an old woman. But the Berayne estate she left to my mother's great-grandfather, as heir to her first husband, Sir John Salusbury of Lleweney. My uncle sold it to Lord Kirkwall's father.[1]

But it will bring matters nearer home to tell you that my mother, who had 10,000*l.*, an excellent fortune in those days, besides an annuity for her mamma's life of 125*l.* per annum, who was living gaily with her brother, Sir Robert Salusbury Cotton, and his wife, Lady Betty Tollemache, refused all suitors attracted by her merits and beauty for love of her rakish cousin, John Salusbury of Bachygraig. He, unchecked by care of a father who died during the infancy of his sons, ran out the estate completely to

[1] Lord Kirkwall sold the property to the Rev. Edward Hughes, whose son, William Lewis Hughes, the present possessor, was created Baron Dinorben, in 1831, of Kinmel Park, Denbighshire. The house was burnt down in 1840. (Sir James Fellowes.)

nothing. *So* completely that the 10,000*l.* would scarcely pay debts and furnish them out a cottage in Caernarvonshire, where—after two or three dead things—I was born alive, and where they were forced by circumstances to remain, till my grandmother Lucy Salusbury—an exemplary creature—should die, and leave them free at least to mortgage or to sell, or to do *some*thing towards reinstating themselves in a less unbecoming situation.

Meanwhile *I* was their joint plaything, and although education was a word then unknown as applied to females, they had taught me to read and speak and think and translate from the French, till I was half a prodigy;[1] and my father's brother Thomas, who was bred up for the ecclesiastical courts with poor papa's money, and who lived in London among the gay and great, said how *his* friends the Duke of Leeds, Lord Halifax, etc., would be delighted could they but see little Hester. My mother, however, thought it would be best to conciliate her own relations, and made *me*, I know not at how early an age, write a letter to my uncle Robert who had lately lost Lady Betty. The scheme prospered: grandmamma Salusbury of Bachygraig was dead, and Sir Robert Salusbury Cotton said he longed to kiss his sister and the little girl; to whom he was perhaps more willing to attach himself, as he had no progeny, and his only brother had married, not much to please *him*, a portionless cousin of his

[1] There is a tradition in the Cotton family that she could repeat the names of most of the rivers in the world, but when asked the name of the river at the bottom of the garden (the Thames) she could not tell it. (Hayward.)

own, Miss Cotton, of Etwall and Belleport, by whom he had many children, among which two only were favourites at Lleweney. An invitation followed, and we came to the *Old Hall* hung round with armour, which struck my infant eyes with wonder and delight.

My uncle soon began to dote on Fiddle, as he called me in fondness; and I certainly did not obtain his love by flattery, as I remember well this odd *téte-à-téte* conversation:—

"Come now, dear," said he, "that we are quite alone, tell me what you expected to see here at Llewenney." "I expected," replied I, "to see an old baronet." "Well, in *that* your expectation is not much disappointed; but why did you think of such stuff?" "Why just because papa and mamma was always saying to me and to one another at Bodvel, what the old baronet would think of this and that: they did it to frighten me I see now; but I thought to myself that kings and princes were but men, and God made *them* you know, Sir, and *they* made old baronets." "Incomparable Fiddle," exclaimed my uncle—"you will see a Mr. and Mrs. Clough at dinner to-day: do you know how to spell Clough?" "No," was the reply; "I never heard the name; but if it had been spelt like *buff*, you would not have asked me the question, They write it perhaps as we write *enough*—c, l, o, u, g, h."

What baby anecdotes are these, you cry. 'Tis so, but your poor friend certainly ceased being in any wise a wonder after she was five years old, at which period we left Wales and came to my uncle's house in Albemarle Street, where he told my mother he should

follow in less than two months; make a new will, and leave poor Fiddle 10,000*l.*, having understood that my parents had by their marriage settlement agreed to entail the old Bachygraig Estate on Thomas Salusbury, brother to papa, and then a doctor in the Commons; and on *his* sons, rather than their own daughter, if they had no male heir. I fancy some rough words passed concerning this. My uncle certainly but ill brooked my father's pride, and he still less willingly endured being informed that, if his quality friends would provide *him* some distant establishment, my mother and myself should share the old baronet's fortune. "No, no, Sir Robert," was the haughty answer, "if I go for a soldier, *your* sister shall carry the knapsack, and the little wench may have what I can work for." I have heard that our parting soon followed this conversation, and scarce were my infantine tears dried for leaving dear Llewenney and my half-adored uncle, before the news reached London of his sudden death by an apoplectic fit; in consequence of which, his brother, Sir Lynch Salusbury Cotton, came into everything by a temporary will kept in case of accidents till one more copious and correct should be formed.

Some traces yet remain upon my mind of poor mamma's anguish and of my father's violent expressions. She has related to me his desperate engagement with some quacks and projectors who pretended to find lead on his encumbered estate, whilst *we* remained in town, and I became a favourite with the Duke and Duchess of Leeds, where I recollect often meeting the famous actor Mr. Quin, who taught me

to speak Satan's speech to the sun in *Paradise Lost*. When they took me to see him act Cato, I remember making him a formal courtesy, much to the Duchess's amusement, perhaps to that of the player. I was just six years old, and we sate in the stage-box, where I kept on studying the part with all my little power, not at all distracted by the lights or company, which they fancied would take my attention. The fireworks for the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle [1] were the next sights my fancy was impressed with. We sate on a terrace belonging to the Hills of Tern—now Lord Berwick's family,—and David Garrick was there, and made me sit on his lap, feeding me with cates, etc.; because having asked some one who sate near why they called those things that blew up, *Gerbes* in the bill of fare, *I* answered, "Because they are like wheat-sheaves, you see, and Gerbe is a wheat-sheaf in French."

When Garrick was intimate at Streatham Park more than twenty years afterwards, he did not like that story: it made him look older, at least *feel* older, than he wished, I suppose.

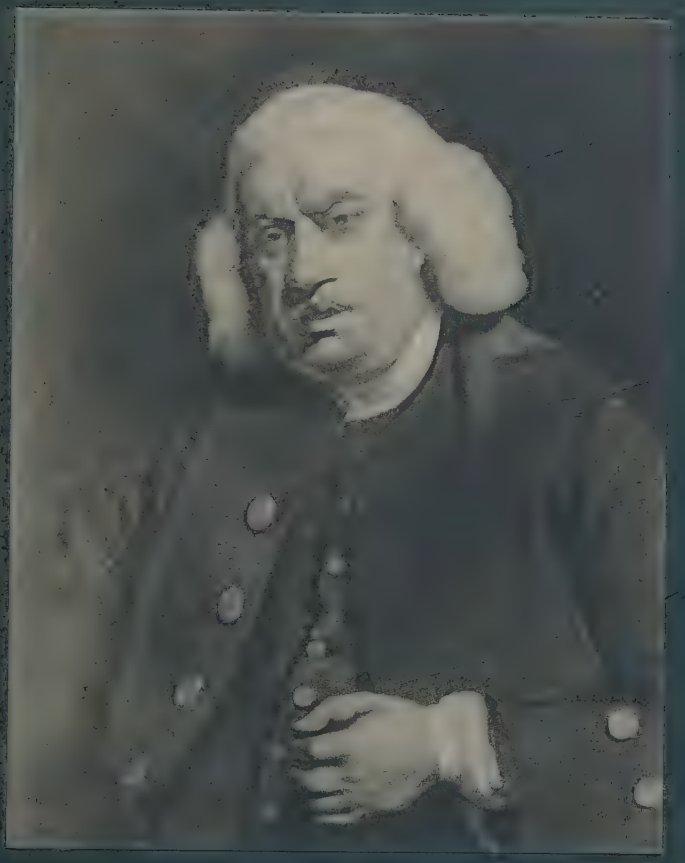
Lord Halifax [2] was now, or soon after, head of the Board of Trade, and wished to immortalise his name —he had no sons—by colonising Nova Scotia. Cornwallis and my father, whom he patronised, were sent out, the *first persons* in every sense of the word; and poor dear mamma was left *sine pane* almost, I believe, certainly *sine nummo*, with her odd little charge, a girl without a guinea, whose mind however she ceased not

[1] The peace of 1748, when the writer was seven.

[2] George Montagu Dunk, second Earl of Halifax. He did "immortalise his name" by giving it to the town of Halifax, N.S.

SAMUEL JOHNSON

After painting by
SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS



to cultivate in every possible manner. For French, writing, and arithmetic, I had no instructor but herself; and when she went from home where I could not be taken, my temporary abode was the great school in Queen Square, where Mrs. Dennis and her brother, the Admiral Sir Peter Dennis,[1] said I was qualified, at eight years old, for teacher rather than learner; and he actually did instruct me in the rudiments of navigation, as the globes were already familiar to me. The small-pox, however, and measles, interrupted my studies for awhile, when my Grandmother Cotton invited my mother and myself to spend a summer in Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire, where she had a fine country seat called East Hyde, not far from Luton, to which I made reference in *Retrospection* (vol. ii. p. 434). This lady, daughter to Sir Thomas Lynch, after whom I was named, had possessed an immense fortune in Jamaica; but being left an orphan at five years old, was, as she always said and I believe, purchased of Lord Torrington, her mother's brother, by Sir Robert Salusbury Cotton for his son Thomas, the child he educated himself in the Tower of London, when confined there on account of his correspondence with the Electress Sophia.

Certain it is that Lady Cotton was scarce fifteen years older than her own eldest son, my dear Uncle Robert, husband of Lady Betty Tollemache; which she considered as little to the honour of her father-in-law who, she believed, obtained her fortune to his family by any means he could.

[1] Sir Peter Denis, one of Anson's captains, who distinguished himself later at Quiberon Bay.

She had made a second choice when left a widow at thirty-seven years old, with many children, all mortally offended at her marrying again; but Captain King was dead, and they were reconciled at the time I am speaking of. At East Hyde I learned to love horses; and when my mother hoped I was gaining health by the fresh air, I was kicking my heels on a corn binn, and learning to drive of the old coachman; who, like every body else, small and great, delighted in taking me for a pupil. Grandmamma kept four great ramping war-horses, *chevaux entiers*, for her carriage, with immense long manes and tails, which we buckled and combed; and when, after long practice, I showed her and my mother how two of them (poor Colonel and Peacock) would lick my hand for a lump of sugar or fine white bread, much were they amazed; much more when my skill in guiding them round the court-yard on the break could no longer be doubted or denied, though strictly prohibited for the future.

Among our Hertfordshire neighbours was Sir Henry Penrice, Judge of the Admiralty, who by the heiress of that branch of the Spencer family had only one daughter, the all-accomplished Anna Maria, who sought my mother's friendship the more eagerly, as she felt her heart daily more and more attached to my father's brother, Doctor Thomas Salusbury, of the Commons. My resemblance to my papa's whole family fixed me a favourite. My mother thought herself ill-used by them, and so in fact she was; her husband having left his brother a power of attorney to do everything for him, and he neglecting all mamma's entreaties, having forbore to change the hands of a

mortgage upon that portion of the Welsh estate appointed for her jointure. Worse than *that*: my mother had scraped up, by dint of miserable privations, money for the purpose; but Uncle Thomas neglected his absent brother's interest, and the estate was lost. Love was, however, *his* apology; and a faint hope, perhaps, that so immense a fortune as that of Miss Penrice might in some wise and on some future day benefit her child, hushed all mamma's complaints. The lovers married. Sir Henry died, and was succeeded by his son-in-law, both in his place, his title, and his estate.

My father had meanwhile, I fear, behaved perversely, quarrelling and fighting duels, and fretting his friends at home. My mother and my uncle, taking advantage of his last gloomy letter, begged him to return and share the gaieties of Offley Place, mentioned in *Retrospection*, vol. i. p. 213: likewise, if I remember rightly, in the Travel Book (vol. ii.[1]), where I recollect the plains of Kalin reminding me of our dear airings upon Lily Hoo,—the common near our house, joining to that of Offley,—scenes I shall see no more!

Here I reigned long, a fondled favourite. Kind Lady Salusbury felt her health decline, but told her husband she should die more happily, persuaded that he would not marry, as he was so attached to the good girl she now considered as her own, having nearly lost her precious life by a severe miscarriage. She, however, lived with him nine years, and said it were pity I should not learn Latin, Italian, and even Spanish, in all which she was conversant. Study was my delight, and such a patroness would have made stones students.

[1] *Observations and Reflections*, etc. See note p. 2.

The Lisbon earthquake had impressed her strongly; and my mother, who was particularly fond of Spanish literature, made me translate a sermon in that language, written and preached in the Jewish synagogue at London by Isaac Netto,—whose name is all I can bring back to mind,—and dedicate it to my dear aunt, Anna Maria Salusbury. A set of pearl and garnet ornaments, which I gave afterwards to Lady Keith,[1] was my shining recompense; but such was my father's conduct, she never did love *him*. My mother she respected, and dear Doctor Collier, a constant guest, did all he could to keep us all happy in one another. Felicity, in this world, however, lasts not long. Poor Lady Salusbury died, at forty-one years old, of dropsy in the breast, and uncle *said* he had no kindness but for me. I think *I* did share his fondness with his stud; our stable was the first for hunters of enormous value,—for racers, too; and our house, after my aunt's death, was even *haunted* by young men who made court to the niece, and expressed admiration of the horses. Every suitor was made to understand my extraordinary value. Those who could read, were shown my verses; those who could not, were judges of my prowess in the field. It was my sport to mimic some, and drive others back, in order to make Dr. Collier laugh, who did not perhaps *wish* to see me give a heart away which he held completely in his hands, since he kindly became my preceptor in Latin, logic, rhetoric, etc.

We began, I think, before I was thirteen years old.

[1] Hester Maria Thrale, Mrs. Piozzi's eldest daughter, who in 1808 married Admiral Lord Keith.

On the day I was sixteen he confessed sixty-four, I remember, and said he was just four times my age, so I suppose he was. The difference or agreement never crossed my mind, nor seemed to have crossed his. A friendship more tender, or more unpolluted by interest or by vanity, never existed; love had no place at all in the connection, nor had he any rival but my *mother*. *Their* influence was of the same kind, and hers the strongest; but it was not till after poor papa's death that I observed she looked on Collier with a jealous eye. We were scarce *all* of us enough to manage with my father's red-hot temper. It was daily endangering our alienation of Sir Thomas Salusbury's fondness, which the arrival of a new neighbour put still more to hazard. We should have made home more agreeable.

My uncle would not then have run to the smiling widow of Wellbury—just at our Park gate—the Honourable Mrs. King, whose blandishments drew him from dear Offley, and made our removal to our London house less painful. The summer before this removal had produced to *me* a new vexation. Lord Halifax was become lieutenant of Ireland,[1] and my father made one of his numerous escort, delighting to attend his patron through his own country, and show him the wonders of Wales. Mamma and I remained at Offley doing the honours. Doctor Collier was in London upon business. My uncle had been to town for a night or two, and returned to tell us what an excellent, what an incomparable young man he had

[1] See note p. 8. Halifax was Lord-Lieutenant from 1761 to 1763.

seen, who was, in short, a model of perfection, ending his panegyric by saying that he was a *real sportsman*. Seeing me disposed to laugh, he looked very grave; said he expected us to like him, and that seriously. The next day Mr. Thrale followed his eulogist, and applied himself so diligently to gain my mother's attention—aye, and her heart, too,—that there was little doubt of her approving the pretensions of so very showy a suitor—if suitor he was to *me*, who certainly had not a common share in the compliments he paid to my mother's wit, beauty, and elegance.

His father, he said, was born in our village at Offley, of mean parents, but had made a prodigious fortune, by his merits: and the people all looked with admiration at his giving 5*s.* to a poor boy who lay on the bank, because he was sure his father had been such a boy. In a week's time the country catched the notion up that Miss Salusbury's husband had been suddenly found by meeting Sir Thomas at the house of Mr. Levinz, a well-known *bon vivant* of those days,—they were not then called amphitryons,—who kept a gay house and a gay lady at Brompton, where he entertained the gay fashionists of 1760.[1] The chaplain of Offley Place, a distant relation of ours,—uncle I think to this Sir Robert Salusbury whom you met once in Park Street (Bath),—having undisclosed hopes of his own to get the heiress, not only took alarm, but cunningly conveyed that alarm to my father, who, when he came home, said he saw his girl already half

[1] Syntax seems not to have been included in the "Latin, logic, rhetoric, etc.," which Miss Salusbury studied with Mrs. Denis and Doctor Collier.

disposed of without his own consent, and swore I should not be exchanged for a barrel of porter, etc.[1]

Vain were all my assurances that nothing resembled love *less* than Mr. Thrale's behaviour: vain my promises that no step on my part should be taken without his concurrence; although I clearly understood, and wrote Dr. Collier word so, that my uncle made this marriage the condition of his favour quite apparently, and that certain ruin would follow my rejection. The letter, perhaps, still exists in which I declared my resolution to adhere to the maxims of filial duty *he* had taught me, and refuse (when I should be asked) any offer, however tempting, that should seek to seduce me from *his* authority under which both myself and my mother were placed. By this time the brothers quarrelled and met no more. My father took us to London. My uncle solaced himself with visiting the widow; and after a miserable winter, which visits from Mr. Thrale —to my mother—rendered terrifying to *me* every day from papa's violence of temper, a note came, sent in a sly manner, from Dr. Collier, to tell me (it was written in Latin) that Sir Thomas would certainly marry Mrs. King the Sunday following, and begged I would not say a syllable till the next day, when *he* would come and break the dreadful tidings to my father.

My countenance, however, showed, or his acuteness discovered, something he did not like; an accusation followed, that I received clandestine letters from Mr. Thrale, a circumstance I had certainly every just reason to deny, and felt extremely hurt, of course, at seeing myself disbelieved. After a fruitless and painful con-

[1] Referring to Thrale's business as a brewer.

test for many hours of this cruel evening, my spirits sunk, I fainted, and my father, gaining possession of the fatal billet, had to ask *my* pardon—poor unhappy soul! and in this fond misery spent we the hours till four o'clock in the morning. At nine we rose; he to go across the park in search of my maternal uncle, Sir Lynch Salusbury Cotton, from whom, and from Dr. Crane, Prebendary of Westminster, he meant to seek counsel and comfort. Me, to the employment of calling our medical friend, Herbert Lawrence, to dinner by a billet of earnest request. *All of us were ill*, but by the time he came, my father died, and was brought us home a corpse, before the dining hour. This was December 1762, fifty-three years ago exactly. Yet are not my feelings blunted!

The Will gave to my mother his Bachygraig House, and estate for life, charged with 5000*l.* for me; to which my uncle, in consideration perhaps of my poor father's having paid every expense of his education at Cambridge, perhaps in recollection of having lost him a farm of 100*l.* a year, added 5000*l.* more; with which (and expectations of course) Mr. Thrale deigned to accept my undesired hand, and in ten months from my poor father's death, were *both* the marriages he feared accomplished.

My uncle went himself with me to church, gave me away, dined with us at Streatham Park, returned to Hertfordshire, wedded the widow, and then scarce ever saw or wrote to either of us; leaving me to conciliate as I could, a husband who was indeed much kinder than I counted on, to a *plain girl*, who had not one attraction in his eyes, and on whom he never had

thrown five minutes of his time away, in any interview unwitnessed by company, even till after our wedding-day was done!

My mother staid with us, however, so did her niece, Miss Hester Salusbury Cotton, now Lady Corbet. Mr. Murphy[1] was introduced, and the facetious Georgey Bodens,[2] as the men called him. Lord Carhampton's father, Simon Luttrell, afterwards known to all the town by the emphatic title "King of Hell,"[3] besides a very sickly old physician, who seemed as if living with us, Dr. Fitzpatrick, a Roman Catholic; the rest were professed Infidels.

When winter came, however, I was carried to my town residence, Deadman's Place, Southwark; which house, no more than that in Surrey, had been seen by me till called upon to inhabit it. Here, too, my mother quitted us, and lived at our old mansion in Dean Street, Soho, then no unfashionable part of the world, and thither I went—oh how willingly! to visit her every day. My husband's sisters[4] (who, like himself, were eminent for personal beauty) now called upon me, looked at me, and in modern phrase, seemed to *quiz*

[1] Arthur Murphy, the friend and biographer of Johnson and Garrick. He introduced Johnson to the Thrales.

[2] An accepted wit, as we may gather from his mention in Madame D'Arblay's Diary. The specimen of his humour that she quotes is not hilariously brilliant. Mr. Bodens described parliament as "a humbug on the nation."

[3] It was told of him that he challenged his son, the Colonel Luttrell (afterwards Earl of Carhampton) of Middlesex election celebrity, who refused to fight him, "not because he was his father, but because he was not a gentleman." (Hayward.)

[4] Mrs. Rice, Mrs. Nesbitt (afterwards Mrs. Scott), Lady Lade, and Mrs. Plumbe.

me, asking how I liked Dr. Fitzpatrick, their brother's Jesuit friend? I answered drily, that the Doctor was well-read and well-bred, apparently in extreme ill health (he was a physician), and that Mr. Thrale's friends must necessarily be mine. The ladies withdrew, disappointed, and I tried with all diligence to canvass the man whom *they* thought, and of course *I* thought, had so much influence; where if I gained none I must become a nuisance. The doctor had no more influence than myself; but being so much *about* them all, could at least tell me *les tracasseries de famille* of which I was wholly ignorant. From him in due time I learned what had determined my husband's choice to *me*, till then a standing wonder. He had, the doctor said, asked several women, naming them, but all except *me* refused to live in the Borough,[1] to which, and to his business, he observed, that Mr. Thrale was as unaccountably attached *now* as he had been in his father's time averse from both. And oh! cried the old man, how would my deceased friend have delighted in this happy sight! alluding to my state of pregnancy.

So summer came again, and Streatham Park was improving, and autumn came, and Lady Keith came,[2] and I became of a *little* more importance. Confidence was no word in our vocabulary, and I tormented myself to guess who possessed that of Mr. Thrale; not his clerks certainly, who scarce dared approach *him*—much less come near *me*; whose place he said was either in the drawing-room or the bed-chamber. We kept,

[1] Thrale's brewery was in Southwark.

[2] Hester Thrale (Lady Keith) was born in 1762.

meantime, a famous pack of fox-hounds, at a hunting box near Croydon; but it was masculine for ladies to ride, etc. We kept the finest table possible at Streatham Park, but *his* wife was not to *think of the kitchen*. So I never knew what was for dinner till I saw it.

Driven thus on literature as my sole resource, no wonder if I loved my books and children. From a *gay* life my mother held me fast. Those pleasures Mr. Thrale enjoyed alone; with *me* indeed they never would have suited; I was too often and too long confined. Although Dr. Johnson (now introduced among us[1]) told me once, before *her* face, who deeply did resent it, that I lived like my husband's kept mistress, —shut from the world, its pleasures, or its cares.

The scene was soon to change. Fox-hounds were sold, and a seat in Parliament was suggested by our new inmate as more suitable to his dignity, more desirable in every respect. I grew useful now, *almost* necessary; wrote the advertisements, looked to the treats, and people to whom I was till then unknown, admired how happy Mr. Thrale must be in such a *wonder* of a wife.

I wondered all the while where his heart lay; but it was found at last, too soon for joy, too late almost for sorrow. A vulgar fellow, by name Humphrey Jackson, had, as the clerks informed me, all in a breath, complete possession of it. He had long practised on poor Thrale's credulity, till, by mixing two cold liquors

[1] "This year (1765) was distinguished by his (Johnson) being introduced into the family of Mr. Thrale, one of the most eminent brewers in England." (Boswell.)

which produced heat perhaps, or two colourless liquors which produced brilliancy, he had at length prevailed on him to think he could produce beer too, without the *beggarly elements* of malt and hops. He had persuaded him to build a copper somewhere in East Smithfield, the very metal of which cost 2000*l.*, wherein this Jackson was to make experiments and conjure some curious stuff, which should preserve ships' bottoms from the worm; gaining from Government money to defray these mad expenses. Twenty enormous vats, holding 1000 hogsheads each—costly contents!—Ten more holding 1000 barrels each, were constructed to stew in this pernicious mess; and afterwards erected, on I forget how much ground bought for the ruinous purpose.

That *all* were spoiled, was but a secondary sorrow. We had in the commercial phrase, no beer to start for customers. We had no money to purchase with. Our clerks, insulted long, rebelled and *ratted*, but I held them in. A sudden run menaced the house, and death hovered over the head of the principal. I think some faint image of the distress appears in Doctor Johnson's forty-eighth letter, 1st vol.[1] But God tempers every evil with some good. Such was my charming mother's firmness and such her fond attachment to us both, that our philosophical friend, embracing her, exclaimed, that he was equally charmed by her conduct, and edified by her piety. "Fear not the menaces of suicide," said he; "the man who has two such females to console him, never yet killed himself, and will not

[1] Mrs. Piozzi's *Letters to and from the late Samuel Johnson*, in two vols., 1788.

now. Of all the bankrupts made this dreadful year," continued he, "none have destroyed themselves but married men; who would have risen from the weeds undrowned, had not the women clung about and sunk them, stifling the voice of reason with their cries." Ah, Sir James Fellowes, and have not I too been in a ship on fire[1] not for two hours, but for two full weeks, between the knowledge of my danger and the end on't?

Well! first we made free with our mother's money, her little savings! about 3000*l*.—'twas all she had; and, big as I was with child, I drove down to Brighthelmstone, to beg of Mr. Scrase[2] 6000*l*. more—he gave it us—and Perkins,[3] the head clerk, had never done repeating my short letter to our master, which only said, "I have done my errand, and you soon shall see returned, *whole*, as I hope—your heavy and faithful messenger, H. L. T."

Perkins' sons are now in possession of the place, their father but lately dead. Dear Mr. Scrase was an old gouty solicitor, retired from business, friend and contemporary of my husband's father. Mr. Rush lent us 6000*l*., Lady Lade 5000*l*.—our debts, including those of Humphrey Jackson, were 130,000*l*., besides borrowed money. Yet in *nine years* was every shilling paid; *one*, if not *two* elections well contested; and we

[1] Alluding to the fire on board an East Indiaman, in which Sir James Fellowes was passenger. (Hayward.)

[2] Richard Scrase, described by Fanny Burney as Mrs. Thrale's "Daddy Crisp."

[3] Became one of the owners of Thrale's brewery under its later name of "Barclay and Perkins." Perkins was greatly esteemed by Johnson.

might, at Mr. Thrale's death, have had money, had he been willing to listen to advice, as you will see by our correspondence, which is now time for you to begin, and be released from these scenes of calamity. The baby that I carried lived an *hour*—my mother a year; but she left our minds more easy. I lay awake twelve nights and days, I remember, 'spite of all art could do; but here I am, vexing your tired ear with past afflictions.

You will see that many letters were suppressed. But as you have probably thought more of my literary, than of my moral or social existence, *though I hope not*, it will be right at least to say that it was during *the winters* of those happy years when I reigned Queen at Offley Place all summer, that Hogarth made me sit for his fine picture of the "Lady's Last Stake," now in possession of Lord Charlemont.

It was then, too, when I was about thirteen, fourteen, and fifteen years old, that I took a fancy to write in the *St. James's Chronicle*, unknown to my parents and my tutor too: it was my sport to see them reading, studying, blaming or praising their own little whimsical girl's performances; but such was their admiration of one *little verse thing*, that I could not forbear owning it, and am sorry that no copy has, I believe, been kept.

The little poetical trash I *did* write in *earnest*, is preserved somewhere, perhaps in *Thraliana*,[1] which I promised to Mrs. Mostyn:[2] perhaps in a small

[1] A diary kept by Mrs. Piozzi from 1776 to 1809. See extracts, p. 164.

[2] Mrs. Piozzi's youngest daughter.

repository I prepared for dear Salusbury,[1] before our final parting: such I meant it to be; but have no guess how you will find the stuff, or whether he ever thought it worth his while to keep old aunt's school exercises—such he would probably and naturally consider them. There is a little poem called "Offley Park" I know; another "On my poor Aunt Anna Maria's favourite Ash Tree"; and one styled "The Old Hunter's Petition for Life," written to save dear Forester from being shot because grown superannuated. There is a little odd metaphysical toy beside, written to divert Doctor Collier after the death of his dog Pompey, for whom James Harris made a Greek epitaph, of which this is the English meaning, as I remember; but no doubt *all is lost*, and these verses are *not* mine. I forget whose though:—

"Here what remains of Pompey lies,
Handsome, generous, faithful, wise.
Then shouldst thou, friend, possess a bitch
In nature's noble gifts as rich;
When Death shall take her, let her have
With Pompey here one common grave;
So from their mingled dust shall rise
A race of dogs as good and wise:
Dogs who disease shall never know,
Rheumatic ache or gouty toe;
Nor feel the dire effects of tea,
Nor show decay by cachexy.
For if aright the future Fates I read,
Immortal are the dogs their pregnant dust shall breed."

---

[1] Piozzi's nephew, whom Mrs. Piozzi adopted and made her heir. He became Sir John Salusbury Piozzi Salusbury.

The great James Harris [1] was no disdainer of trifles. He wrote the two comical dialogues at the end of *David Simple*, an old novel composed by Dr. Collier's sister,[2] who was dead before I knew him, in conjunction with Sally Fielding, whose brother was author of *Tom Jones*, not yet obsolete. James Harris gave me his *Hermes* interleaved, that I might write my remarks on it, proving my attention to philosophical grammar, for which study I had shown him signs of capacity, I trust; but Collier would not suffer him to talk metaphysics in my hearing, unless he himself was the respondent. Oh, what conversations! What correspondences were these! never renewed after my wedding-day, October 11th, 1763. Dr. Johnson was perhaps justly offended if I even appeared to recollect them, and in my mother's presence. There was no danger. They had never fallen in Mr. Thrale's way —of course.

But you make me an egotist, and force me to remember scenes and ideas I never dreamed of communicating. The less so, because finding my fortune of late circumscribed in a manner wholly new to me, no doubt remained of all celebrity following my lost power of entertaining company, giving parties, etc.; and my heart prepared to shut itself quite up, con-

[1] Author of *Hermes, or a Philosophical Inquiry concerning Universal Grammar*, 1751. His son became first Earl of Malmesbury.

[2] Fielding declares his sister to be the "real and sole author." Harris's dialogues on *Fashion* and *Much Ado* were incorporated by Sarah Fielding not with *David Simple* but with the later *Familiar Letters between the principal Characters in David Simple.*

THE SUMMER HOUSE AT STREATHAM, 1775

After painting by
SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS

vinced there existed not a human creature who cared one atom for poor H. L. P. now she had no longer money to be robbed of. That disinterested kindness does exist, however, my treatment here at Bath evinces daily, and in six months will come—if things do but continue in their natural course—my restoration day. Meanwhile this odd prefatory collection of Biographical Anecdotes are at your service.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

A Retrospect

My heart was free, my head full of Authors, Actors, Literature in every shape; and I had a dear, dear friend, an old Dr. Collier, who said he was sixty-six years old, I remember, the day I was sixteen, and whose instructions I prized beyond all the gayeties of early life: nor have I ever passed a day since we parted in which I have not recollected with gratitude the boundless obligations that I owe him. He was intimate with the famous James Harris of Salisbury, Lord Malmesbury's father, of whom you have heard how Charles Townshend [1] said, when he took his seat in the House of Commons,—"Who is this man?"—to his next neighbour; "I never saw him before." "Who?" "Why, Harris, the author, that wrote one book about Grammar [so he did] and one about Virtue." "What does he come here for?" replies Spanish Charles; "he will find neither Grammar nor Virtue *here*." Well, my dear old Dr. Collier had much of both, and delighted to shake the superflux of his full mind over mine, ready to receive instruction conveyed with so much tender assiduity.

In a few years (our Letters tell the date) Johnson

[1] Chancellor of the Exchequer in Chatham's Ministry in 1766.

was introduced; and now I must laugh at a ridiculous *Retrospection.* When I was a very young wench, scarce twelve years old I trust, my notice was strongly attracted by a Mountebank in some town we were passing through. "What a fine fellow!" said I; "dear Papa, do ask him to dinner with us at our inn!—or at least, Merry Andrew, because he could tell us such *clever stories of his master.*" My Father laughed sans intermission an hour by the dial, as Jacques once at motley. — Yet did dear Mr. Conway's fancy for H. L. P.'s conversation grow up, at first, out of something not unlike this, when, his high-polished mind and fervid imagination taking fire from the tall Beacon bearing Dr. Johnson's fame above the clouds, he thought some information might perhaps be gained by talk with the old female who so long *carried coals to it.* She has told all, or nearly all, she knew—

> "And like poor Andrew must advance,
> Mean mimic of her master's dance,
> But similes, like songs in love,
> Describing much, too little prove."

So now, leaving Prior's pretty verses, and leaving Dr. Johnson too, who was himself severely censured for his rough criticism[1] on a writer who had pleased all in our Augustan age of Literature, poor H. L. P. turns egotist at eighty, and tells her own adventures. (From Conway MSS.[2])

[1] Johnson condemns Prior's "amorous effusions" as being the "dull exercises of a skilful versifier."

[2] In her old age Mrs. Piozzi formed a warm attachment to an actor named Rugg, whose stage name was William Augustus Conway. After his death by suicide in 1828 his effects were sold in New York, and among them were Young's *Night*

The Globe Theatre

For a long time, then,—or I thought it such,—my fate was bound up with the old Globe Theatre, upon the Bankside, Southwark; the alley it had occupied having been purchased and thrown down by Mr. Thrale to make an opening before the windows of our dwelling-house. When it lay desolate in a black heap of rubbish, my Mother, one day, in a joke, called it the Ruins of Palmyra; and after they had laid it down in a grass-plot, Palmyra was the name it went by, I suppose, among the clerks and servants of the brewhouse; for when the Quaker Barclay bought the whole,[1] I read that name with wonder in the Writings. . . . But there were really curious remains of the old Globe Playhouse, which, though hexagonal in form without, was round within, as circles contain more space than other shapes, and Bees make their cells in hexagons only because that figure best admits of junction. Before I quitted the premises, however, I learned that Tarleton, the actor of those times, was not buried at St. Saviour's, Southwark, as he wished, near Massinger and Gower, but at Shoreditch Church. He was the first of the profession whose fame was high enough to have his portrait solicited for to be set up as a sign; and none but he and Garrick, I believe,

Thoughts, and Mrs. Piozzi's *Anecdotes of Johnson*, and *Observations and Reflections*, all containing marginal notes by Mrs. Piozzi herself.

[1] "The greatest event of my life. I have sold my brewhouse to Barclay, the rich Quaker, for 135,000*l*." *Thraliana*, June 3, 1781.

ever obtained that honour. Mr. Dance's[1] picture of our friend David lives in a copy now in Oxford St.,—the character King Richard. (Conway MSS.)

The Supremacy of British Belles

A genteel young clergyman, in our Upper Crescent, told his mamma about ten days ago, that he had lost his heart to pretty Miss Prideaux, and that he must absolutely marry her or die. *La chère mère* of course replied gravely: "My dear, you have not been acquainted with the lady above a fortnight: let me recommend you to see more of her." "More of her!" exclaimed the lad, "why I have seen down to the fifth rib on each side already." This story will serve to convince Captain T. Fellowes and yourself, that as you have always acknowledged the British Belles to *exceed* those of every other nation, you may now say with truth, that they *outstrip* them.

The Dangers of Revision

The labours of the press resemble those of the toilette: both should be attended to and finished with care; but once completed, should take up no more of our attention, unless we are disposed at evening to destroy all effect of our morning's study.

[1] Sir Nathaniel Dance-Holland, one of the original members of the Royal Academy.

"The Streatfield"

"So you may set the Streatfield at defiance."—*Johnson*, Oct. 15, 1778; *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 20.[1]

My dear and ever honoured Doctor Collier was the cause of my making this Miss Streatfield's acquaintance. I had learned from others that he dropped into her hands soon as dismissed from mine; and that he gained rather than lost by the exchange, had long been my secret consolation. She was but fourteen or fifteen when they first met, and he was growing sickly. She did her own way, and her way was to wait on *him*, who instructed her in Greek, and who obtained from her excess of tenderness for him, what I could not have bestowed. I have heard her say she grudged his old valet the happiness of reaching him a glass of wine, and out of her house did he never more make his residence, but died in her arms, and was buried at her expense, the moment she came of age.[2] All these

[1] The references are to Mrs. Piozzi's *Letters to and from the late Samuel Johnson*, 2 vols., 1788.

[2] The attachment inspired by Dr. Collier in both his pupils resembles that of Stella and Vanessa to Swift, the growth of which is described in the Dean's best poem, "Cadenus and Vanessa":—

> "I knew by what you said and writ
> How dang'rous things were men of wit:
> You caution'd me against their charms,
> But never gave me equal arms.
> Your lessons found the weakest part,
> Aim'd at the head, but reach'd the heart."

The *Edinburgh Review* imagines him to have been Arthur

accounts did I never cease listening to, till I observed my beautiful friend, not contented with her legitimate succession to the heart of Doctor Collier, was endeavouring to supplant me in the esteem of Mr. Thrale, whose good opinion, assailed vainly by Baretti, it was my business and my bounden duty to retain. Miss Thrale, now Lady Keith, was in *this* case my coadjutor; though she had acted in concert with Baretti,[1] she abhorred this attack of Miss Streatfield, who was very dangerous indeed, both from her beauty and learning. Wit she possessed none of, and was as ignorant as an infant of—

"That which before us lies in daily life."

No wonder Mr. Thrale, whose *mind* wanted some new object, since he had lost his son, and lost beside the pleasure he had taken in his business, before all knowledge of it was shared with *myself*,—no wonder that he encouraged a sentimental attachment to Sophia Streatfield, who became daily more and more dear to him, and almost necessary. No one who visited us missed seeing his preference of her to me; but she was so amiable and so sweet natured, no one appeared to blame him for the unusual and unrepressed delight he took in her agreeable society. I was exceedingly op-

Collier, LL.D., described by the author of *Lives of the Civilians* as an ingenious but unsteady and eccentric man, the confidential law-adviser of the notorious Duchess of Kingston. (Hayward.)

[1] Giuseppe Marc Antonio Baretti came to London in 1751, and soon became intimate with Johnson and Thrale. For nearly three years he was resident tutor at Streatham Place. Mrs. Thrale accuses him of subverting her authority with her children and of trying to poison her husband's mind against her.

pressed by pregnancy, and saw clearly my successor in the fair S. S.[1] as we familiarly called her in the family, of which she now made constantly a part, and stood godmother to my new-born baby, by bringing which I only helped to destroy my own health, and disappoint my husband, who wanted a son. "Why Mr. Thrale is Peregrinus Domi," said Dr. Johnson; "he lives in Clifford Street, I hear, all winter"; and so he did, leaving his carriage at his sister's door in Hanover Square, that no inquirer might hurt his favourite's reputation; which my behaviour likewise tended to preserve from injury, and we lived on together as well as we could. Miss Browne,[2] who sung enchantingly, and had been much abroad; Miss Burney, whose powers of amusement were many and various, were *my* companions then at Streatham Park, with Doctor Johnson, who wanted me to be living at the Borough, because less inconvenient to *him*, so he said I passed my winter in Surrey, "feeding my chickens and starving my understanding": but 1779, and the summer of it was coming, to bring on us a much more serious calamity.

[1] The young "woman of feeling" so amusingly described in Madame D'Arblay's *Diary*. The entry for June 14, 1781, runs: "We had my dear father and Sophy Streatfield, who, as usual, was beautiful, caressing, amiable, sweet, and—fatiguing." See pp. 39, 178.

[2] Fanny Brown was for some time the rival of "S. S." at Streatham Place. She also is depicted with pleasant irony in Fanny Burney's Journal. Both were "in fevers in his [Johnson's] presence, from apprehension."

Mr. Thrale's Illness

I

"Your account of Mr. Thrale's illness is very terrible." —*Johnson*, June 14, 1779; *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 47.

My account of Mr. Thrale's illness had every reason to be terrible.[1] He had slept at Streatham Park, and left it after breakfast, looking as usual.

His sister's husband, Mr. Nesbitt, often mentioned in these Letters and Memoirs, had been dead perhaps a fortnight. *He* was commercially connected, I knew, with Sir George Colebrook and Sir Something Turner; but that was all I knew—and that was nothing. I knew of nothing between Thrale and them, till *after my return from Italy*, and was the more perhaps shocked and amazed when, sitting after dinner with Lady Keith[2] and Doctor Burney and his daughter, I believe, my servant Sam opened the drawing-room door with *un air effaré*, saying: "My master is come home, but there is something amiss." I started up, and saw a tall black female figure, who cried, "Don't go into the library, don't go in I say." My rushing by her somewhat rudely was all her prohibition gained: but there sat Mrs. Nesbitt holding her brother's hand, who I perceived knew not a syllable of what was passing. So I called Dr. Burney, begged him to fly in the post-chaise, which was then waiting for him, and send

[1] This does not refer to Mr. Thrale's last illness. He died on April 4, 1781.

[2] Her eldest daughter, the future Lady Keith.

me some physician, Sir R. Jebb or Pepys, or if none else could be found, my old accoucheur, Doctor Bromfield of Gerard Street.[1] 'Twas *he* that came; and, convincing me it was an apoplectic seizure, acted accordingly, while the silly ladies went home quite contented I believe: only Mrs. Nesbitt said she thought he was *delirious*; and from her companion I learned that he had dined at their house, had seen the will opened, and had dropped as if lifeless from the dinner-table; when, instead of calling help, they called their carriage, and brought him five or six miles out of town in that condition. Would it not much enrage one? From this dreadful situation medical art relieved Mr. Thrale, but the natural disposition to conviviality degenerated into a preternatural desire for food, like Erisicthon of old

> "Cibus omnis in illo
> Causa cibi est; semperque locus fit inanis edendo."[2]

It was a distressing moment, and the distress increasing perpetually, nor could any one persuade our patient to believe, or at least to acknowledge, he ever had been ill. With a *person*, the very wretched wreck of what it had been, no one could keep him at home. Dinners and company engrossed all his thoughts, and dear Dr. Johnson encouraged him in them, that *he* might not appear *wise*, or predicting his friend's certainly accelerated dissolution.

[1] Sir R. Jebb, physician to George III., 1786; Sir Lucas Pepys, physician extraordinary to George III., 1777; William Bromfield, 1712–1792, surgeon to Queen Charlotte.

[2] Ovid, *Met.* viii. 841.

Death of the baby *boy* I carried in my bosom was the natural consequence of the scene described here; but I continued to carry him till a quarrel among the clerks, which I was called to pacify, made a complete finish of the *child*, and nearly of me. The men were reconciled though, and my danger accelerated their reconcilement.

II

"It was by bleeding till he fainted that his life was saved."—*Johnson*, Aug. 24, 1780; *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 185.

Here is another allusion to that famous bleeding which certainly in Southwark did save the life of Mr. Thrale, and by its *immediate effects* ruined my nerves for ever.

Sir Richard[1] however said: "We have paid his heavy debt this time, but he must eat prudently in future." No one however could control his appetite, which Sir Lucas Pepys, who was at Brighthelmstone, observing, commanded us to town, and took a house not 100 yards from his own for us, in Grosvenor Square, and I went every day to the Borough, whence Lancaster, a favourite clerk third in command, was run away with 1850*l.* Thither poor Dr. Delap[2] followed

[1] Sir R. Jebb (see footnote previous page).

[2] John Delap, D.D., incumbent of Woollavington, Sussex, a writer of melodramas for Drury Lane. Dr. Delap's chief claim to fame is his being reproved by Johnson for his valetudinarianism. "Dear Doctor, do not be like the spider, man, and spin conversation incessantly out of thy own bowels."

me, begging a prologue to his new play, and I remember composing it in the coach, as I was driving up and down after Lancaster: but my business in Southwark was of far severer import.

Some fellow had incited our master to begin a new and expensive building to the amount of 20,000*l.*, after the progress of which he was ever inquisitive, and kept the plan of it in his bedchamber. So little did Dr. Johnson even *then* comprehend the strict awe I stood in of my first husband, that I well recollect his saying to me, "Madam! You should tear that foolish paper down: why 'tis like leaving a wench's loveletter in the apartments of a man whom you would wish to cure of his amorous passion." God knows I durst as well encounter death as disturb Mr. Thrale's loveletters or his building plans. The next grand agony was seeing him send out cards of invitation to a concert and supper on the 5th of April. He had himself charged Piozzi, who was the first to tell me, with care of the musical part of our entertainment, and had himself engaged the Parsees, a set of Orientals, who were shown at all the gay houses,—the lions of the day.[1] I could but call my coadjutors, Jebb and Pepys; who tried to counteract this frolic, but in vain. They were obliged to compromise the matter by making him promise to leave town for Streatham immediately after the 5th. "Leave London! lose my Ranelagh season!" ex-

[1] "Mrs. Garrick and I were invited to a fine assembly at Mrs. Thrale's. There was to be a fine concert and all the fine people were to be there; but the *chief attraction* was to meet the Bramin and the two Parsees . . . but just as my hair was dressed, came a servant to forbid our coming, for that Mr. Thrale was dead." (Letters of Hannah More.)

claimed their patient. "Why, Sir, we wished you to be here, that our attendance might be more regular, and less expensive: but since we find you thus unmanageable, you are safest at a distance." *Now*, Johnson first began to see, or *say* he saw the danger, but *now* his lectures upon temperance came all too late. Poor Mr. Thrale answered him only by inquiring when lamprey season would come in? requesting Sir Philip,[1] who was dining with us, to write his brother, the Prebendary of Worcester, a letter, begging from *him* the first fish of that kind the Severn should produce. I winked at Sir Philip, but he, following us women half upstairs, said: "I understand you, Madam, but *must* disobey. A friend I have known thirty-six years shall not ask a favour of me in his last stage of life and be refused. What difference can it make?" Tears stood in *his* eyes, and my own prevented all answer. In effect, that day was Mr. Thrale's last! I saw him in Sir Richard's arms at midnight. Pepys came at ten, and never left the house till early light showed me the way to Streatham: and from thence, hoping still less disturbance, to Brighthelmstone: where we had a dwelling house of our own, and whither you will see the letters all addressed.

This was thirty-four or thirty-five years ago, yet did I never completely recover my strength of body or of mind again. I am sure I never did! The shocks of 1780 and 1781 are not *yet* either recovered or forgotten by poor H. L. P.

[1] Sir Philip Jennings Clerke, M.P. for Totnes. Fanny Burney in her *Diary* records one of the many disputations between Clerke and Johnson.

Dr. Collier

"Poor dear Dr. Collier."—*Mrs. Thrale to Johnson*, Aug. 10, 1780; *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 183.

Perhaps this is no improper place to observe that La Bruyère tells his readers with confidence how the firmest friendships will be always dissolved by the intervention of love seizing the heart of either party. It may be so: but certainly the sentiment with which dear Dr. Collier inspired me in 1757 remains unaltered now in the year 1815. After my father's death my kind and prudent mother, resolving I should marry Mr. Thrale, and fearing possibly lest my Preceptor should foment any disinclination which she well knew would melt in her influence, or die in her displeasure, resolved to part us, and we met no more: but never have I failed remembering *him* with a preference as completely distinct from the venerating solicitude which hung heavily over my whole soul whilst connected with Doctor Johnson, as it was from the strong connubial duty that tied my every thought to Mr. Thrale's interest, or from the fervid and attractive passion which made twenty years passed in Piozzi's enchanting society seem like a happy dream of twenty hours. My first friend formed my mind to resemble *his*. It never *did* resemble that of either of my husbands, and in that of Doctor Johnson's mine was swallowed up and lost. Oh true were these words, put together so long ago:—

" The sentiment I feel for you
No pow'r on earth shall e'er subdue ;
No pow'r on earth shall e'er remove,
Nor pungent grief nor ardent love."

Sophia Streatfield too, if yet living, will bear testimony to the strange power of Doctor Arthur Collier over the minds of his youthful pupils when past seventy years old, and to the day of his *death*, which when I knew her, she lamented annually, by wearing a black dress, etc. If he did not burn my letters, Latin exercises, etc., she possesses them.

Mr. Thrale's passion for *her* she played with; a little perhaps diverting herself by mortifying *me*, but there was no harm done, I am confident. He thought her a thing at least semi-celestial; had he once found her out a mere mortal woman, his flame would have blazed out no more. And it *did* blaze frightfully indeed during one dreadful attack of the apoplexy at our Borough house, alluded to in these letters, page 178, when by Sir Richard Jebb's conditional permission, Shaw the apothecary bled Mr. Thrale *usque ad deliquium*, and I thought all over. When, however, temporary and apparent recovery followed the horrid process of stimulating cataplasms which awakened him from coma to delirium, that delirium only appeased by bleeding quite to faintness; when he had remained mute five long days; not speaking a consolatory word to one of us; friends, sisters, daughters, clerks, physicians,—no sooner was Sophy Streatfield's voice heard in Southwark, than our patient sate up in bed, conversed with *her* without hesitation, and even said, with a complimentary smile,

kissing her hand, that the visit she had made that day, had repaid all his sufferings. It was from this attack, when he recovered, that Lawrence,[1] Jebb, etc., sent us to Bath, whence rioters dislodged and drove us to Brighthelmstone. From thence we returned to London: a ready-furnished house in Grosvenor Square being thought the best place by medical advisers, while Perkins assured Doctor Johnson that his master would be *safest*, in every respect, at a *distance* from his *business*.

Thrale's Will—Sale of the Brewery

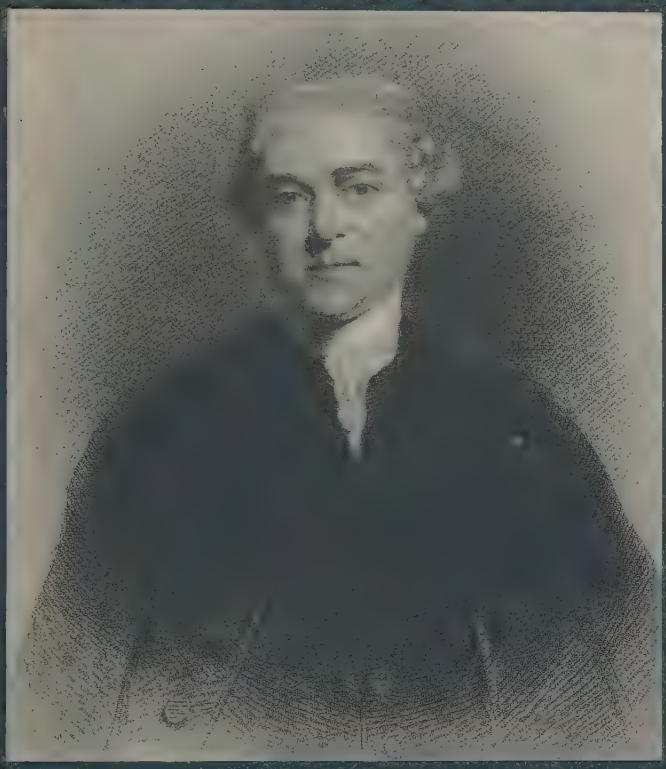
"We read the will to-day."—*Johnson*, April 5, 1781; *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 192.

It was neither kind or civil, you will say, to open the will in my absence, but Mr. Thrale had been both civil and kind in labouring to restore to me the Welsh estate,[2] which I had meant to give him in our moments of uneasiness when I became possessed of it by Sir Thomas Salusbury's death, from whom we had once expected Offley Place in Hertfordshire, and all its wide domain. Notwithstanding that disappointment, my husband left me the interest of 50,000*l.* for my life, doubtless in return for my diligence during our distresses in 1772, because it is specified to be given over and above what was provided in our marriage settlement. He left me

[1] Dr. Thomas Lawrence, the friend and physician of Johnson.
[2] See pp. 16, 65.

HENRY THRALE

After painting by
SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS



also the plate, pictures, and linen of both houses, forgetting even to name Brighthelmstone,[1] so all I had bought for *that* place fell to the ladies (who said loudly what a wretched match their *poor* papa had made). It was not so, however. Mr. Thrale had received the rents and profits from Wales, 9000*l.*, and had cut timber for 4000*l.* more. My mother and my aunts, and an old Doctor Bernard Wilson,[2] had left me 5000*l.* among them, more or less, and I carried 10,000*l.*, in my hand, so that the family was benefited by me 28,000*l.* at the lowest, besides having been, as King Richard expresses it,

"A jack-horse in their great affairs."

On Mr. Thrale's death I kept the counting-house from nine o'clock every morning till five o'clock every evening till June, when God Almighty sent us a knot of rich Quakers[3] who bought the whole, and saved me and my coadjutors from brewing ourselves into another bankruptcy, which hardly could, I think, have been avoided being, as we were five in number, Cator, Crutchley, Johnson, myself, and Mr. Smith,[4] all with equal power, yet all incapable of using it

[1] The older name of Brighton. The modern name came into general use at the end of the eighteenth century, but it occurs as early as 1660. Fanny Burney, in her *Diary*, uses both names in a single paragraph.

[2] Canon of Lichfield (*d.* 1772).

[3] The purchaser was David Barclay, a London banker. He bought it for £135,000, and put his nephew into it along with the manager, Perkins.

[4] John Cator, a timber-merchant, M.P. for Ipswich; Jerry Crutchley, believed by Mrs. Piozzi to be Thrale's natural son; Henry Smith, a second cousin of Mr. Thrale.

without help from Mr. Perkins, who wished to force himself into partnership, though hating the whole lot of us, save only *me*. Upon my promise, however, that if he would find us a purchaser, I would present his wife with my dwelling-house at the Borough,[1] and all its furniture, he soon brought forward these Quaker Barclays, from Pennsylvania I believe they came,—her own relations I have heard—and they obtained the brewhouse a prodigious bargain, but Miss Thrale was of my mind to part with it for 150,000*l.*; and I am sure I never did repent it, as certainly it was best for us five females at the time, although the place has now doubled its value, and although men have almost always spirit to spend, while women show greater resolution to spare.

Will it surprise you now to hear that, among all my fellow executors, none but Johnson opposed selling the concern? Cator, a rich timber merchant, was afraid of implicating his own credit as a commercial man. Crutchley hated Perkins, and lived upon the verge of a quarrel with him every day while they acted together. Smith cursed the whole business, and wondered what his relation, Mr. Thrale, could mean by leaving him 200*l.* he said, and such a burden on his back to bear for it. All were well pleased to find themselves secured, and the brewhouse *decently*, though not *very* advantageously disposed of, except dear Doctor Johnson, who found some odd delight in signing drafts for hundreds and for thousands, to him a new, and as it appeared delightful, occupation. When

[1] The house was in Deadman's Place, Bankside, now called Park Street, Borough Market.

all was nearly over, however, I cured his honest heart of its incipient passion for trade, by letting him into *some*, and *only* some, of its mysteries. The plant, as it is called, was sold, and I gave God thanks upon Whit Sunday, 1781, for sparing me farther perplexity, though at the cost of a good house, etc.

First Acquaintance with Piozzi

"You have got Piozzi again."—*Johnson to Mrs. Thrale*, Dec. 3, 1781.

Dr. Johnson, mentioning dear Piozzi, has encouraged me to tell how and where our acquaintance began.[1] I was at Brighthelmstone in August 1780, or thereabout, when the rioters[2] at Bath had driven my sick husband and myself and Miss Thrale (Fanny Burney went home to her father) into Sussex for change of place. I had been in the sea early one morning, and was walking with my eldest daughter on the cliff, when, seeing Mr. Piozzi stand at the library door, I accosted him in Italian, and asked him if he would like to give that lady a lesson or two whilst at Brighton, that she might not be losing her time. He replied, coldly, that he was come thither himself merely to recover his voice, which he feared was wholly lost; that he was composing some music, and lived in great

[1] The story of their acquaintanceship is traced in the Introduction.

[2] During the Gordon Riots. Cf. Mme. D'Arblay's *Diary*, June 11, 1780.

retirement; so I took my leave, and we continued our walk, Miss Thrale regretting she had lost such an opportunity; but on our returning home the same day, Mr. Piozzi started out of the shop, begged my pardon for not knowing me before, protested his readiness to do anything to oblige *me*, and his concern for not being able to contribute to our amusement, but that I should command everything in his now limited power.

We parted, and at breakfast the post brought me a letter from the present Madame D'Arblay, saying that her father's friend, Mr. Piozzi, was gone to Brighthelmstone, where she hoped we should meet, for though he had lost his voice, his musical powers were enchanting, and that I should find him a companion likely to lighten the burden of life to *me*, as he was *just a man to my natural taste.* This letter is existing now, and that was her expression. Mr. Thrale found his performance on the forte-piano so superior to everything then heard in England, and in short took such a fancy to his society, that we were seldom apart, except while Mr. Piozzi was studying to compose the six fine sonatas, that he dedicated to his favourite pupil, Miss Child,[1] afterwards Lady Westmoreland. His voice strengthened by sea-bathing, but never recovered the astonishing powers he brought with him first from Italy. I fancied they would have returned when we went abroad together four years after, but they never did; and he was contented in future to delight, without surprising, his hearers, unless they had indeed taste enough to

[1] Daughter of Sir Francis Child, the younger, head of the great banking house.

understand that unrivalled *manner* of singing, which he as tenor, and Pacchierotti[1] as soprano, had completely to themselves.

Mr. Piozzi was the son of a gentleman of Brescia in Lombardy, who meant him for the Church and educated him accordingly; but he resisted the celibat, escaped from those who would have made him take the vows, and as his uncle said, "Ah, Gabrieli, thou wilt never get nearer the altar than the organ-loft," so it proved. He ran from the Venetian state to Milan, where Marchese D'Araciel proved his constant friend and protector, and encouraged him in his fancy for trying Paris and London, instead of being a burden to his parents, who had fourteen children, a limited income, and many pecuniary uneasinesses. Whilst *here*, his fame reached the Queen of France, who sent for him and Sacchini,[2] the great opera composer, and it was when they came back loaded with presents, and honours, and emoluments, that Dr. Johnson congratulated me on having got Piozzi again. Sacchini returned and died at Paris, but Piozzi staid (till I drove him from me), notwithstanding all the offers of the Court of France, when I was living at Bath, "deserted, spiritless, afflicted, fallen."

[1] Gasparo Pacchierotti, a celebrated singer, who was a favourite guest at Dr. Burney's house in St. Martin's Street.

[2] Antonio Sacchini, a famous Neapolitan composer, who came to England in 1772. He died in Paris in September, 1786. Among his works, which eight years before his death numbered seventy-eight, was the music to a theme from Fanny Burney's *Evelina*.

Domestic Trials

"You can hardly think how bad I have been whilst you were in all your altitudes at the opera, and all the fine places, and thinking little of me."—*Johnson*, Dec. 20, 1783; *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 52.

Dear Harriet died of measles, hooping-cough, and strumous swellings in the neck and throat, 1783. Lucy had fallen a sacrifice to the same train of evils; and Cecilia, now Mrs. Mostyn, had her health so shaken after the date of this letter, that it was with the utmost difficulty she recovered. Mr. Piozzi and I had made what we considered as our final parting in London about a month before, when I requested him to tame the newspapers by quitting England, and leave me to endure my debts, my distractions, and the bitter reproaches of my family *as I could*. He had given up all my letters, promises, etc., into Miss Thrale's hands (now Lady Keith). You laughed when I told you that his expression was: "Take it to you your mamma, and make it of *her* a countess; it shall kill me, I know, but it shall kill her too." Miss Thrale took the papers, and turned her back on him, I remember. Well! Sir Lucas Pepys alone knew the true state of my heart. He pitied me, kept my secret inviolable, behaved like a brother to me, and told all the inquirers that I was very ill indeed, and that *he had advised Bath.*

To Bath I went, and Piozzi prepared for his melancholy journey, having first lent me a thousand pounds, for which I remitted the interest to Italy, and our

ladies[1] said I had bought him off *with their money*: so the calumny outlived even our separation. He had not left London when I was summoned to attend the two little girls at Mrs. Ray's school, Russel House, Streatham; but I refused another painful interview, however earnestly my lover begged it. I breakfasted with Sir Lucas Pepys: told him my heroism, and never knew till Piozzi told me after he returned to England, that he had been sitting at a front window of some public-house on the road all that dreadful Saturday, to see my carriage pass backwards and forwards to where the children resided. Oh what moments! oh what moments! but I went back to Bath. We lived in Russel Street, where I found my three eldest daughters at their work and their drawings. I *think* they scarcely said "How d'ye do? or how does Cecilia[2] do?" and we went on together without either rough words or smooth ones. Dr. Staker, to whom Pepys had recommended the care of my health, cut his own throat, and Doctors Woodward (of the pretty house in Gay Street) and Dobson, from Liverpool, were our medical advisers.

Doctor Johnson never came to look for me at Streatham, where I lodged during Cecy's danger; and I would not go into London for fear of encountering Piozzi's eyes somewhere. So I only stopped at Pepys' house for an hour, close to Hyde Park, and away to Bath again, where one curious thing befell me, and but one. You have heard of many severities shown

[1] Her daughters.

[2] Her youngest daughter, Cecilia (Mrs. Mostyn), who accompanied her mother to Bath.

me, now hear of one man like yourself.[1] My maid came to me half-alarmed, half-pleasant somehow, and said: "I have had a king's messenger sent to me, Madam; but here's the letter, and the man is gone again. I offered him money, but he had orders to take none."

The letter said:—

"MADAM,—Let nothing add to your present pain, as no one surely deserves so much happiness. Your letter is gone safe; I transmitted the *amiable contents* to Mr. Piozzi, who will receive it in due time; but you should be careful not to send another packet unpaid for, unless you would direct it to me. Your signing no name, and dating, forced me to peruse every word of a letter in three languages which no one could so have written but Mrs. Thrale, to whom I wish all that such merit and virtue, etc. etc. etc.

"JACKSON,
"Comptroller of the Foreign
Post Office."

He had directed the letter to my maid!

We left our cards with this gentleman as soon as we were married, of course, and he made us a fine dinner and a grand entertainment, and I saw for the first time my kind friend and admirer, Mr. Jackson. Poor fellow! he soon died, but not till Mr. Piozzi had sung with his daughter, and given him all the pleasure he was capable of receiving in the last stage of life, and a miserable state of health.

[1] Sir James Fellowes.

Foreign Tour

"Prevail on Mr. Piozzi to settle in England."—*Johnson*, July 8, 1784; *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 376.

Dr. Johnson's advice corresponded exactly with Mr. Piozzi's intentions. He was impatient to show Italy to me and *me* to the Italians, but never meant to forbear bringing his wife home again, and showing he had brought her. Well aware of the bustle his marriage made, it was his most earnest wish that every doubt of his honour and of my happiness should be dispelled; so that whilst our ladies and Madame d'Arblay, that was Miss Burney, and Baretti,[1] and all the low Italians of the Haymarket who hated my husband, were hatching stories how he had sold my jointure, had shut me up in a convent, etc., we made our journey to our residence in Italy as showy as we possibly could. All the English at every town partook of our hospitality; the inhabitants came flocking, nothing loth, and we sent presents to our beautiful daughters by every hand that would carry them. Miss Thrale was of age by now, and I left Miss Nicholson,[2] the bishop's granddaughter, whom they appeared to like exceedingly, *with them*, but she soon quitted her post on observing that they gave people to understand she was a cast

[1] Baretti attacked Mrs. Piozzi in three papers in *The European Magazine*, 1788.

[2] The chaperon chosen by Mrs. Piozzi for her daughters. "In 1797, we find Sir Walter Scott meeting his future wife (a ward of the Marquis of Downshire), 'under the care of Miss Nicholson, a daughter of the late Dean of Exeter.'" (A. R. Ellis.)

mistress of dear Piozzi, who never saw her face out of their company, except once at a dinner visit.

But I have not told you our parting. That I resided at Bath, these letters are a proof; that my residence was a wretched one, needs no asserting. Insults at home, and spiteful expressions in every letter from the guardians, broke my spirits quite down; and letters from my grieving lover, when they *did* come, helped to render my life miserable. I meant not to call him home till all my debts were paid; and my uncle's widow, Lady Salusbury, had threatened to seize upon my Welsh estate if I did not repay *her* money, lent by Sir Thomas Salusbury to my father; money in effect which poor papa had borrowed to give *him* when he was a student at Cambridge, and your little friend just born. This debt, however, not having been cancelled, stood against me as heiress. I had been forced to borrow from the ladies; and Mr. Crutchley, when I signed my mortgage to them for 7000*l.*, said: "Now, Madam, call your daughters in and thank them; make them your best *curtsey*," (with a sneer) "for keeping you out of a gaol." He added 500*l.* or 800*l.* more, and I paid that off as alluded to;[1] but Doctor Johnson knew how I was distressed, and you see how even he had been writing!!

Will you wonder to hear how ill I was? After much silent suffering, Doctor Dobson, who felt for me even to tears, left me one evening in the slipper

[1] Dr. Johnson wrote to Mrs. Thrale, London, April 19th, 1784:—"I am sensible of the ease that your repayment of Mr. Crutchley has given: you felt yourself *geneé* by that debt: is there an English word for it?" (Hayward.)

bath, and I suppose ran to Lady Keith, and spoke with some severity; for she came into the room with him, and said, "The doctor tells me, Madam, he must write to Mr. Piozzi about your health; will you be pleased to tell us where to find him?" "At Milan, my dear," was the faint reply, "with his friend, the Marquis d'Araciel (a Spanish grandee); *his* palace, Milan, is sufficient direction." "Milan!" exclaimed they all at once, for not one word had ever passed among us concerning him or his destination. "Milan!" So Doctor Dobson, I trust, took pen and ink, and the next day I was better. Miss Thrale declared her resolution to go to their own house at Brighthelmstone, and I entreated permission to attend them. Short journeys, change of air, etc., helped to revive me, and Miss Nicholson went with us to Stonehenge, Wilton, etc., in our way to Sussex, whence I returned to Bath to wait for Piozzi. He was here the eleventh day after he got Dobson's letter. In twenty-six more we were married in London by the Spanish ambassador's chaplain, and returned hither to be married by Mr. Morgan, of Bath, at St. James's Church, July 25, 1784.[1]

[1] A copy of the certificate was found among her papers :—

"Anno Domini 1784, die vero 23 Julij, nullo impedimento detecto, rite in matrimonio conjuncti fuere Gabriel Piozzi, et Hester Lynch Thrale, præsentibus notis testibus Aloisio Borghi, Francisco Mecci, et Angelica Borghi.

"P^r. me RICHARDUM SMITH.

"Nous Jean Balthazar d'Adhemar de mont Falcon des premiers Comtes souverains d'Orange; Monteliman, Grignan, etc., gouverneur des villes et Châteaux de Dieppe, grand Bailly d'epée

Greenland, the solicitor my husband now employed, discovered 1600*l.* still due to me, which was paid on demand; and for the rest of the debt, Piozzi, laughing, said it would be discharged in three years at farthest. So it was; and I felt as much, I think, of astonishment as pleasure. From London we went immediately to Paris, Lyons, Turin, Genoa, and Milan; where, as the Travel Book tells you, we spent the winter, and where the Marquis of Araciel and his family paid me most distinguished attention. There Mr. Parsons[1] dined with us, I remember, and left me a copy of complimentary verses too long to insert here; but we met again the following summer at Florence, where we were living in a sort of literary coterie with Mr. and Mrs. Greathead, Mr. Merry, whom his friends called Della Crusca,[2] and a most agreeable *et cetera* of English

de Mantes et de Meulan, Chevalier de l'ordre Royal et Militaire de St. louis, premier ecuyer de Madame Elizabet de France, Marechal des Camps et armées du Roy et Son Ambassadeur extraordinaire et plenipotentiaire aupres de sa majesté brittanique, etc.

"Certifions que la Signature apposée a l'acte cy de pied est veritablement celle de M. Richard Smith que pleine et entiere confiance doit y etre ajoutée tant en jugement que de hors, en foi de quoi nous avons Signé le present, fait contresigner par l'un de nos Secretaires, et apposé le sceau de nos armes. Donné a notre hotel le Vingt-sept Juillet mil Sept cent quatre vingt quatre.

(Signed) "Le C^te^ D'ADHEMAR.

"Par son excellence

"HERVIEN." (Hayward.)

[1] William Parsons (*d.* 1807), one of the leaders of the Della Cruscan fraternity of poets.

[2] Bertie Greathead (1759–1826), an unsuccessful dramatist and Della Cruscan poet. The craze, which was put an end to

and Italians. We had designed giving a splendid dinner on our wedding-day to Lord Pembroke and the whole party, and Mr. Parsons presented me verses which will not be understood except I write out my own, that provoked them. He had written a hymn to Venus, so I said :—

While Venus inspires, and such verses you sing
As Prior might envy and praise ;
While Merry can mount on the eagle's wide wing,
Or melt in the nightingale's lays :
On the beautiful banks of this classical stream
While Bertie can carelessly rove,
Dividing his hours, and varying his theme
With philosophy, friendship, and love ;

In vain all the beauties of nature or art
To rouze my tranquillity tried ;
Too often, said I, has this languishing heart
For the joys of celebrity sigh'd.
Now sooth'd by soft music's seducing delights,
With reciprocal tenderness blest ;
No more will I pant for poetical flights,
Or let vanity rob me of rest.

by Gifford's *Baviad* and *Mæviad*, began in England in 1787 on the return of Robert Merry from Florence. Merry, an ex-guardsman, had sought refuge in Florence from his creditors, and his literary pretensions had won him entrance to the *Academia della Crusca*, an old society founded in 1582. His verses, which appeared chiefly in *The World*, were signed "Della Crusca," and the name was applied to the ridiculous "school" he quickly founded.

The Slave and the Wrestlers, what are they to me?
From plots and contentions removed;
And Job with still less satisfaction I see,
When I think of the pains I have prov'd.
It was thus that I sought in oblivion to drown
Each thought from remembrance that flows:
Thus fancy was stagnant I honestly own,
But I called the stagnation repose.

Now, wak'd by my countrymen's voice once again
To enjoyment of pleasures long past;
Her powers elastic the soul shall regain,
And recall her original taste.
Like the loadstone that long lay conceal'd in the earth,
Among metals which glitter'd around;
Inactive her talents, and only call'd forth,
When the ore correspondent was found.

To these lines Mr. Parsons brought the following very flattering answer, which he repeated after dinner:—

"*To Mrs. Piozzi*

"Tho' sooth'd by soft music's seducing delights,
And blest with reciprocal love;
These cannot impede your poetical flights,
For still friends to the Muses they prove.
Then sitting so gaily your table around,
Let us all with glad sympathy view
What joys in this fortunate union abound,
This union of wit and virtù.

"May the day that now sees you so mutually blest
In full confidence, love, and esteem,
Still return with increasing delight to your breast,
And be Hymen your favourite theme!
Nor fear that your fertile strong genius should fail,
Each thought of stagnation dispel;
The fame which so long has attended a *Thrale*,
A *Piozzi* alone shall excel.

"As the ore must for ever obedient be found
By the loadstone attracted along:
So in England you drew all the poets around,
By the magical force of your song:
The same power on Arno's fair side you retain;
Your talents with wonder we see:
And we hope from your converse those talents to gain,
Tho' like magnets—in smaller degree."

Residence in Italy

Before we began our journey, my good husband bespoke a magnificent carriage capable of containing every possible accommodation, and begged me to take tea enough and books enough; but when looking over the last article he saw "Diodati's Italian Bible, with Notes" (this was in 1784, I remember), "Ah ciel!" he exclaimed, "this will bring us into trouble. Be content, my dear creature, with an English Bible, and reflect that you are not travelling as you ought to be, like a Protestant lady of quality, but as the wife of a

native, an acknowledged Papist, and one determined to remain so." I replied, from my heart, that I desired to appear in his country in no other character than that of his wife; that I would preserve my religious opinions inviolate at Milan, as he did his at London; and that all would go on, to use his own phrase, *all' ottima perfezzione.* Observing an undertoned expression, however, saying, "They shall tease *quest' anima bella* as little as I can help," my heart *felt* (though I changed the conversation) that my mind must prepare itself for controversy. The account of temptations he told me I should undergo of *another* kind I drove from me with unaffected laughter, but perceived that *he* was best pleased when I replied to them with equally unaffected but more *serious* protestations of exclusive and unalterable love.

. . . . . .

He was right all the while. When we arrived at Milan, our abiding place, I perceived the men of quality and *bon ton* considered me as fair game to shoot their senseless attentions at; and my sometimes cold, sometimes indignant, reception of their odd complimentary addresses, was received at first with most unmerited displeasure, and in a short time with admiration no less undeserved. Conjugal fidelity being a thing they had no conception of, and each concluding I kept my favours for some one else, nothing undeceived them but my strictly adhered-to resolution of never suffering a *tête-à-tête* with any man whatever except my husband, and laughing with them in company, saying we inhabited a Casa Fidele, and should do honour to the residence.

MARIA, COUNTESS OF COVENTRY
(Miss Gunning)

After painting by
Sir Joshua Reynolds

The truth is, old Comte Fidele, a widower of seventy years old, said his house was too big for him (an invalid), and gave us up the winter side of his palace for a year, paying only 80*l.* My bed-chamber, twenty-seven feet long and eighteen feet high, was lighted by one immense window at the end, and looked over the naviglio to the beautiful mountains of Brianza. Out of *this* went a handsome square room where I received my company in common. Out of that we walked into a large dinner apartment, next to which was the servants' hall (as we should call it, but known in Italy by name of anti-camera), where and from whence the servants answered the bell. Through this opened the best drawing-room, with two fire-places, two large glass lustres, four enormous windows with yellow damask curtains I am ashamed to say how long, but my maid always said they were eight yards from top to bottom. Her apartment opened through *this*; for all were passage rooms, and a small pair of stairs led to a lovely cold bath. I have not done yet. Behind my magnificent bed of white-watered tabby, and very clean, a door opened into a large light closet where I kept my books; and through that a commodious staircase led to Mr. Piozzi's bed-chamber, and a beautiful dressing-room or study, where he was supposed to receive company, people on business, etc. All this very well furnished indeed for four-score pounds a year!! A.D. 1784.

The showy valet was a Frenchman hired at Paris, the gaudy butler out of livery resembling nothing but a goldfish, had eighteen pence a day, and the man cook no less. One woman, besides my own English

Abigail, formed our household; a word I should not have used, for they all walked home in the evening, after the wives and children, etc., had been brought into the kitchen almost *literally* to lick the plates. It seemed very odd, but I believe Mr. Piozzi paid everybody every night of his life. I remember his asking me one day what I thought our dinner came to; we were eight at table, the dishes seven and nine. When I had made some ridiculous conjectures, he showed me that the whole expense, wine included, was thirteen shillings of our money, no more, and I expected to hear him say how happy he was. Not a bit; he was happy only in my attachment and society; his countrymen were his scourge. They told him, as I was a Protestant I was of course an infidel, and should be a favourite at the German Court which the Emperor kept at Milan. So I was; but one day when some of our Italian ecclesiastics dined with us, and met the Austrian Count Kinigh, the Viennese librarian, etc., who endeavoured to play upon the natives, ridiculing their superstitions, etc., I could bear no more of what they called philosophy, the less perhaps because they hoped I should be pleased with such discourse, and much amazed our Milanese friends by saying, when applied to, that I really thought the thorns of ancient philosophy were now only fit to burn in the fire, unless we could make a hedge of them to fence in the possession of Christian truth.

This speech won all the old abbates' hearts at once, and was echoed about with ten times the praise it deserved. I was now assailed on every side to become

a Romanist, for *Catholics* I never would submit to call *them* who excluded from salvation every sect of our religion but their own. Dear Piozzi grew more and more weary of this controversial chat; but it was comical to see with how much pleasure he witnessed my gaining even a momentary triumph over these men, skilled in disputation, and masters of their own language. "Are you a Calvinist, Madam?" said one of the Monsignori. "Certainly *not*," was the reply. "Do you kneel to receive the Sacrament?" "I *do*." "And are not those fellows damned who do receive it standing or sitting?" "I believe *not*," said I. "Our blessed Lord did not Himself eat the passover according to the strict rules of the Mosaical law, which insists on its being eaten *standing*; whereas we know that Jesus Christ reclined on a triclinium, as was the usage of Rome and of *the times*. Nay, perhaps He was pleased to do so that such disputes should not arise; or, if arising, that His example might be appealed to." "What proof have you of our Saviour's reclining on a triclinium?" "St. John's leaning on His breast at supper," said I. "Oh, that was at common meals, not at the passover." "Excuse me, my lord, it was at the *last* solemn supper, which we all commemorate with our best intentions, some one way, some another. *Their* method is not yours, neither is it *mine*; let us beware of judging lest we ourselves be judged." "Fetch me a Bible, sir," said Monsignore. "I will bring mine," said I. "Excuse *me* now, Madam," replied my antagonist; "we cannot abide but by the Vulgate." Canonico Palazzi offered to go; I begged of him to buy me one at the next

bookseller's three doors off. My victory was complete, and I have the *Bible still* which won it for me.

All this, however delightful, grew *very* wearisome and a *little* dangerous; and we were glad when springtime came that we might set out upon our travels.

. . . . . .

Every new-comer from that country (England) told us how all ill-reports had subsided, how the Cardinal Prince d'Orini's civilities had been related up and down, and in short that we had but to return, secure of every comfort Great Britain could afford. Mr. Piozzi said, the moment every debt should be discharged, that he would turn his horses' heads towards the island he had always preferred to every other place; and, so saying, we travelled on, as happy in leaving Milan as in arriving there. *Au reste*, as the French say, few things befell us worth recording, except Count Manucci's [1] visit. He had been intimate with Mr. Thrale in England, as Johnson's letters abundantly testify, and had taken a fancy to Mr. Piozzi at Paris, when he was there with Sacchini. Hearing, therefore, of his marriage, he came one morning, but never had a notion that it was with *me* he had connected himself. "Ah, Madame!" exclaimed the Count, "quel coûp de Théâtre!" when the door opened, and showed him an old acquaintance with a new name. This was the nobleman who, I told you, lamented so tenderly that his sister's children were *counterfeited*.

[1] Johnson made his acquaintance when visiting Paris with the Thrales in 1775. The following year Manucci made a tour of this country.

Return to England

The letters from our daughters had been cold and unfrequent during the whole absence; a little more so as we approached nearer home.[1] The newspapers had told of our exploits at Brussels, and public good-humour seemed disposed to wait and even to meet our return. Fector, the government officer at Dover, would not even *look* into our portmanteaus, trunks, etc.; and I saw instantly that the tide was turned. Numberless cards were left at the Royal Hotel, where we remained till a house in Hanover Square was fitted up to receive us, and on the 22nd of May, we opened with a concert and supper, the more willingly as Mr. Cator,[2] in whose hands we placed our pecuniary affairs at starting, pronounced the mortgage paid off, and 15,000*l.* in the bank to begin with. This Mr. Cator *had* been one of our insulting enemies; was acting executor to Mr. Thrale, and guardian to his daughters; *had* said that I should be soon deceased, but my death would be concealed by Mr. Piozzi, while he enjoyed my jointure, etc.; *this* man's approbation was indeed a triumph, and we now intended to be happy.

Cecilia had been left at Ray and Frey's school at Streatham, with friends I could depend on; but Lady Keith removed her thence, and placed her at Stevenson's, Queen Square, without my knowledge or consent. We kept our distance then, and so did they; meeting only in public. I took my little mad-headed Cecilia home, and we had masters to her, etc.

[1] Mr. and Mrs. Piozzi returned to England 1787.

[2] See p. 41.

Nor do I know when the sisters and I should have met again, had not *she* grown so fast that at fourteen years old or six months more, Mr. Piozzi felt himself alarmed, and was advised by our friends, Lord Huntingdon,[1] Sir Charles Hotham,[2] and the Greatheads, with whom we lived familiarly, to put the young lady into Chancery, a measure he was most earnest to adopt. We were at Streatham Park, but I observed my husband unusually anxious, when an old Mr. Jones who had married Sir William Fowler's daughter, my mother's first cousin, told me that the Miss Thrales had made overtures of reconciliation through *him* (who lived much with us), and that he should make a breakfast party for us all at his house in Cavendish Square, with my permission. It was the middle of the French Revolution, so there was talk enough, and the day went on very well, with an invitation to the ladies for Easter Tuesday, I remember; and Pisani, the Venetian ambassador, Lord[3] and Lady Coventry, and 130 people, in short, witnessed our gaiety and mutual good humour. Three weeks more, however, had scarce elapsed before Miss Thrale, now Viscountess Keith, came down on horseback, and said she must speak to us on *business*. It was to beg Mr. Piozzi would *not* put Cecilia into Chancery. Their fortunes, they alleged, would be examined by lawyers, and *dear* Mr. Cator's accounts

[1] Theophilus Hastings, ninth Earl of Huntingdon, whose wife, Selina, was the founder of "Lady Huntingdon's Connexion."

[2] M.P. for Southwark—Mr. Thrale having been his unsuccessful rival in September 1780.

[3] The sixth Earl of Coventry (1722–1809). His first wife was the famous beauty, Maria Gunning, who died in 1760.

too would be hauled over,[1] with which *they* were well contented; alluding, besides this, to some undisclosed dealings and connections of their father's, wholly *new* and very surprising to *me*, who had no notion of his affairs beyond the counting-house and brewhouse yard. In short, they frighted us into every compliance they could wish, then kept their distance as before, sending perpetually for Cecy.

Libels and odd ill-natured speeches appeared sometimes in the public prints, and one day of the ensuing winter, when I was airing my lap-dogs in a retired part of Hyde Park, Lord Fife[2] came up to me, and after a moment's chat, said, "Would you like to know your friends from your enemies?" in a Scotch accent. "Yes, very much, my lord," was the reply. "Ay, but have you strength of mind enough to bear my intelligence?" "Make haste and tell me, dear my lord," said I. "Why then the Burneys are your enemies, that you so fostered and fondled; more than that, Baretti has been making up a libel . . . and every magazine has refused it entrance except a new work carried on by the female Burney."[3] "Never

[1] See pp. 41, 61.

[2] James Duff, second Earl of Fife (1729–1809).

[3] Mrs. Piozzi, in this scrap of dialogue, is quite Elizabethan in her own language. The words she assigns to Lord Fife are reminiscent of a modern police-court report. The "female Burney" certainly did not *carry on* the *European Magazine* in which Baretti's libellous abuse appeared in 1788. Mrs. Piozzi was evidently sure that Fanny Burney was aiding Baretti. The entry in *Thraliana* for August 1, 1788, runs: "Baretti has been grossly abusive in the *European Magazine* to me: that hurts me but little; what shocks me is that those treacherous Burneys should abet and puff him. He is a most ungrateful because

mind," replied I, "nobody will read their work; I feel as I ought towards your lordship's friendship, which you cannot prove better than by not naming the subject; it will die away, so will the authors; good morrow, and a thousand thanks." . . . My own books came out one by one: *they* pleased, and I suffered not these tormentors much to vex me. We went on spending our money at and *upon* Streatham Park, till old Mr. Jones and the wise Marquis Trotti advised Piozzi to make the tour of North Wales, and see *my* country, *my* estate, etc. We had been all over Scotland, except the Highlands, where we were afraid of carrying Cecy because of her unsteady health. I staid with dear Mrs. Siddons, at Rose Hill, while our friends made their ramble, and came back as much delighted with Denbighshire and Flintshire as Mr. Thrale had been disgusted with them. This was charming. Piozzi had fixed upon a spot, and resolved to build an Italian villa on the banks of the Clwydd. Even Mr. Murphy applauded the project, and we drew in our expenses, preparing to engage in brick and mortar.

Conclusion

Gout now fastened on Mr. Piozzi, who built his pretty villa in North Wales, and conforming to our religious opinions, kindly set our little church at Dymerchion in a state it never before enjoyed, spending sums of money on its decoration, and making a vault for my ancestors and for ourselves to repose

unprincipled wretch; but I *am* sorry that anything belonging to Dr. Burney should be so monstrously wicked."

in. I wrote verses for the opening of our tiny temple, and dear Piozzi set them most enchantingly to music; our clerk, he said, was a very good genius; and I trust a more virtuous or pious pleasure could not be felt than ours when teaching those poor people to sing the lines you will read over leaf.

With homely verse and artless lays,
Full oft these humble roofs shall ring;
Whilst to our dear Redeemer's praise
Rough youths and village maidens sing.[1]

Incarnate God! when He appear'd,
And blessings all around Him spread,
Though still by radiant myriads fear'd,
He chose the poor, the lowly shed.

And sure before He comes again
In awful state to judge the world;
Resounding choirs though He disdain,
Temples and tow'rs in ruin hurl'd;

To unambitious efforts kind,
Pleas'd He permits our rustic lays;
Our simple voices, unrefin'd,
Have leave to sing their Saviour's praise.

The house, our dwelling-house I mean, was built from a design of its elegant master's own hand, and he set poor old Bachygraig up too;[2] repaired and

[1] Mrs. Piozzi apparently had Collins's *Dirge in Cymbeline* in mind.

[2] "Mr. Piozzi built the house for me, he said; my own old chateau, Bachygraig by name, tho' very curious, was wholly uninhabitable; and we called the Italian villa he set up as mine in the vale of Cluid, Brynbella, or the beautiful brow,

beautified it, and to please his silly wife, gilt the Llewenny lion on its top. The scroll once held in his paw was broke and gone. Lombardy, where his (Mr. Piozzi's) relations lived, was torn by faction, and his father, a feeble old man of eighty-one years old, equal to one hundred in our island, was actually terrified into apoplexy, lethargy, and death. His son, who half entertained a tender thought that they might meet once more, grieved for his loss severely, the more so, as he himself said, because "Sarà quel che sarà, ma alla fin, il sangue non e acqua." His brother, I am afraid, joined the Republicans, leaving a very deserving lady, born at Venice, whose friends were wholly ruined, though her uncle, the Abbate Zendrini, was afterwards in high favour, and even appointed confessor to Buonaparte. They had baptized one of their babies by name of John Salusbury in compliment to me, and Mr. Piozzi sent to bring him out of the confusion. He came an infant between three and four years old. We educated him first at Mr. Davis's school at Streatham, where my own son had been placed so many years before, and then with Mr. Shephard, of Enborne, Berkshire, whence he commonly came to us at Streatham Park, or Bath, or Brynbella.

You know the rest. You know that dear Mr. Piozzi died of the gout at his pretty villa in North Wales.[1] You know that he left me *that*, and everything else, never naming his nephew in the will, only leaving

making the name half Welsh and half Italian, as *we* were." (Conway MSS.)

[1] In March, 1809. Mrs. Piozzi lived at Brynbella until 1814, when she gave it up to her husband's nephew, Sir John Salusbury Piozzi Salusbury.

among his father's children 6000*l.* in the three per cents., being the whole of his savings during the twenty-five years he had shared and enjoyed my fortune. Unexampled generosity indeed! And true love! Could I do less than repay it to the child whose situation in life I now felt responsible for! I bred him with his friends at Oxford, yet he stood alone, *insulated* in a nation where he had no natural friend. Incapacitated to return where his religion would have rendered him miserable, and petted, and spoiled, till any profession would have been painful. What could I do? The boy had besides all this formed an attachment to his friend's sister. What could I do? You know what I *did* do. I gave them my estate; and resolving that Mr. Thrale's daughters should suffer as little as possible by this arrangement, I repaired and new fronted their house at Streatham Park, and by the enormous expense incurred *there*, and the loss of my rents from Denbighshire and Flintshire, reduced myself to the very wretched state *you found* me in, and lavished upon me a friendship, which, at the sauciest hour of my life, would by *my* mind have been esteemed an honour, but in this sad deserted stage of it the *truest*, very near *the only cordial*. *Thus* then, as Adam says to Raphael in Milton's *Paradise Lost*:—

> "*Thus* have I told thee all my state; and brought
> *My* story to that sum of earthly bliss
> Which *I* enjoy: and since at length to *part*,
> *Go*; sent of heaven, angelic messenger,
> Gentle to *me*, and affable hath been
> Thy conversation, to be honour'd ever
> With grateful memory,"

by H. L. Piozzi.

FROM MARGINAL NOTES ON *LETTERS TO AND FROM THE LATE SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D., ETC.*, 1788[1]

MR. SEAWARD.—Mr. Seaward, who wrote the *Anecdotes*:[2] he was only son to a rich brewer, whom he disappointed and grieved by his preference of literature to riches. His head, however, was not quite right. I believe his principles were vitiated by his studies among the Swiss infidels: Helvetius, D'Alembert, and the rest of them. He kept his morality pure for the sake of his health perhaps, for he was a professed valetudinarian.

Mr. Keep.—Mr. Keep, when he heard I was a native of North Wales, told me that *his* wife was a Welsh woman, and desired to be buried at Ruthyn. "So," says the man, "I went with the corpse myself, because I thought it would be a *pleasant journey*, and indeed I found Ruthyn a very beautiful place."

Sir Robert Chambers.[3]—The box goes to Calcutta

[1] The name, or passage, suggesting the note is given when required for its elucidation.

[2] William Seward (1747–1799), author of *Anecdotes of Some Distinguished Persons*, 1795–1797.

[3] Made Johnson's acquaintance in 1766; Chief Justice in Bengal, 1789–1799. He was a member of the Literary Club. In May 1773 (*vide* Boswell) he was the cause of a "ludicrous exhibition of the awful, melancholy, and venerable Johnson."

to Sir Robert Chambers, a favourite with them all. (I never could see why.) He was judge in India, married Fanny Wilton the statuary's daughter, who stood for Hebe at the Royal Academy. She was very beautiful indeed, and but fifteen years old when Sir Robert married her. His portrait is in the library at Streatham Park.[1]

Bath is often mentioned in these letters, but I forgot among the baby anecdotes which precede them, to say how I remembered being carried about the rooms by Beau Nash,[2] and taken notice of by Lady Caroline, mother to the famous Charles James Fox.

"Why should you suspect me of forgetting lilly lolly?"—*Johnson.*

Ask me about this stuff, and I'll try to tell you: come, here it is. One of our Welsh squires had a half-witted son,—his sole heir, poor fellow! and the parents fondled it accordingly. When Christmas came, and all the country was invited at Llewenney Hall, the seat of my mother's *eldest* brother, who married Lady Elizabeth Tollemache, came these dear Wynnes and their booby boy about eleven years old. "What does the child say?" cries my aunt, "it sounds like lilly lolly." "Indeed, my Lady Betty," replies the mother, in a sharp Welsh accent, "Dick does *say* lilly lolly, sure enough: but he *mains*: How do you do, Sir Robert Cotton?" I had probably in some unprinted letter said: "Here's a deal of lilly lolly, which I sup-

[1] See Appendix.

[2] Richard Nash's "reign" at Bath lasted from 1705 to about 1750.

pose you forget, but *it means* How do you do, Dr. Johnson?"

Foote.—"Did you see Foote at Brighthelmstone?—Did you think he would so soon be gone?—Life, says Falstaff, is a shuttle. He was a fine fellow in his way; and the world is really impoverished by his sinking glories. Murphy ought to write his life, at least to give the world a Footeana. Now, will any of his contemporaries bewail him? Will Genius change *his sex* to weep? I would really have his life written with diligence."[1]—*Johnson.*

Doctor Johnson was not aware that Foote broke his heart because of a hideous detection; he was trying to run away from England, and from infamy, but death stopped him. Doctor Johnson never could persuade himself that things were as bad as the sufferer or his friends represented them; he thought it *wrong* to believe so, and steadily made the best *on't.*

Richardson.—Doctor Johnson said, that if Mr. Richardson had lived till *I* came out, my praises would have added two or three years to his life: "For," says Dr. Johnson, "that fellow died merely for want of change among his flatterers: he perished for want of *more*, like a man obliged to breathe the same air till it is exhausted."

[1] "A very able essay on the *Life and Character of Foote* has been written by Mr. Forster, who clears his memory of the calumny which shortened his life." (Hayward.) Foote was accused of infamous charges by the subornation of William Jackson, the Irish revolutionist, who was secretary at the time to Foote's persistent enemy, Elizabeth Chudleigh, the self-styled Duchess of Kingston.

The Burneys.—Doctor Burney and his family are often spoken of in these Memoirs. He was a man of very uncommon attainments: wit born with him, I suppose; learning, he had helped himself to, and was proud of the possession; elegance of manners he had so cultivated, that those who knew but little of the *man*, fancied he had great flexibility of mind. It was mere pliancy of body, however, and a perpetual show of obsequiousness by bowing incessantly as if *acknowledging* an inferiority, which nothing would have forced him to *confess*. I never in my life heard Johnson pronounce the words, "I beg your pardon, Sir," to any human creature but the apparently soft and gentle Dr. Burney. Perhaps the story may be related in the *Anecdotes*: but as I *now* recollect it, thus it is. "Did you, Madame, subscribe 100*l.* to build our new bridge at Shrewsbury?" said Burney to me. "No, surely, Sir," was my reply. "What connexion have I with Shropshire? and where should I have money so to fling away?" "It is very *comical*, is it not, Sir?" said I, turning to Dr. Johnson, "that people should tell such unfounded stories?" "It is," answered he, "neither *comical* nor serious, my dear; it is only a wandering lie." This was spoken in his natural voice, without a thought of offence, I am confident; but up bounced Burney in a towering passion, and to my much amaze, put on the hero, surprising Doctor Johnson into a sudden request for pardon, and protestation of not having ever intended to accuse his friend of a falsehood. The following lines written, *sur le champ*, with a gold pen I gave him, prove he could make more agreeable *impromptus* than this I have related:—

"Such implements, tho' fine and splendid,
They say can ne'er *write well*:
With common fame that truth is blended,
Let this example tell.

"If bounteous Thrale could thus confer
Her learning, sense, and wit;
Who would not wish a gift from her,
Who—not to beg—submit?

"Paupers from Grub Street at her gate
Would crowd, both young and old,
In humble guise to supplicate
For thoughts—not pens of gold.

"For not alone the gift of tongues,
The Muses' grace and favour:
Adorn her prose, and on her songs
Bestow the Attic flavour.

"The Virtues all around her wait
T' infuse their influence mild;
And every duty regulate
Of parent, wife, and child.

"Such judgment to direct each storm,
Each hurricane to weather;
A mind so pure, a heart so warm,
How seldom found together!"

There was a merry tale told about the town of some musical nobleman having been refused tickets for his

ELIZABETH, DUCHESS OF HAMILTON AND
DUCHESS OF ARGYLL
(Miss Gunning)

After painting by
Sir Joshua Reynolds

private concert about this time by blind Stanley,[1] who he had always patronised: and of his going to a grave friend's, I forget who, where, foaming with anger, he at length exclaimed: "But I will go to Burney's house to-night (where there was music), and that will *do* for him." "Are you mad, my dear Lord?" says the grave man amazed: "to talk of setting a blind man's house on fire, because he has refused your favourite girl a ticket? Fie! fie! I am ashamed of listening to such strange things." The *équivoque* was now well understood, but having no acquaintance with the doctor, the gentleman thought he had menaced going to *burn his* house.

We had been talking of the French rondeaux one day, and *both* doctors said they were impracticable in English, so I made *this*—Musa loquitur:

To *burn ye* with rapture, or melt you with pity,
A rondeau was never intended:
Yet the lines should be light, and the turn should be witty,
And the jest is to see how 'tis ended.
To finish it neat in an elegant style
Though Phœbus himself should discern ye;
And though to throw light on the troublesome toil,
Should he shine hot enough for to burn ye,
You still would be vex'd,
Incumbered, perplex'd,

[1] John Stanley (1713–1786), musical composer, organist of St. Andrew's, Holborn, and of the Inner Temple.

So teizing the rhymes would return ye:
In a fit of despair
Then this moment forbear,
And let me some humility learn ye:
Leave writing with ease,
And each talent to please,
And making of rondeaux to—*Burney*.

"I shall be in danger of crying out, with Mr. Head, *catamaran*, whatever that may mean."—*Johnson*.

A comical hack joke. Ask me, and I will tell you one or *two* more tales about catamaran. Come; here it is: You do not hate nonsense with affected fastidiousness, or fastidious affectation, like those who have little sense. Turn the page then, over.

This Mr. *Head*, whose real name was *Plunkett*, a low Irish parasite, dependant on Mr. Thrale primarily, and I suppose, secondarily on Mr. Murphy, was employed by them in various schemes of pleasure, as you men call profligacy: and on this occasion was deputed to amuse them by personating some *lord*, whom his patrons had promised to introduce to the beautiful Miss Gunnings[1] when they first came over with intent to make their fortunes. He was received accordingly, and the girls played off their best airs, and cast kind looks on his introducers from time to time: till the fellow wearied, as Johnson says, and disgusted with his ill-acted character, burst out on a sudden as they sate at tea, and cried, "Catamaran! young gentlemen with

[1] Elizabeth Gunning married the Duke of Hamilton in 1752 and the Duke of Argyll in 1759. Her sister, Maria, in 1752 married the Earl of Coventry.

two shoes and never a heel: when will you have done with silly jokes now? Leddies," turning to the future peeresses, "never mind these merry boys; but if you really can afford to pay for some incomparable silk stockings, or true India handkerchiefs, *here they are now*": rummaging his smuggler's pocket; but the girls jumped up and turned them all three into the street, where Thrale and Murphy cursed their senseless assistant, and called him *Head*, like *lucus* a *non lucendo*, because they swore he had none. The duchess (of Hamilton), however, never did forgive this impudent frolic; Lady Coventry, more prudently, pretended to forget it.

Catamaran! was probably a mere Irish exclamation which burst from the fellow when impatient to be selling his smuggled goods. There is exactly such a character in Richardson's *Clarissa*: Captain Tomlinson, employed by Lovelace.

"But —— and you have had, with all your adulations, nothing finer said of you than was said last Saturday night of Burke and me. We were at the Bishop of ——'s, a bishop little better than *your* bishop; and towards twelve we fell into talk, to which the ladies listened, just as they do to you; and said, as I heard, *there is no rising unless somebody will cry fire.*"—*Johnson*, May 23, 1780.

The lady was Mrs. Montagu; Johnson's bishop was the Bishop of St. Asaph (Shipley); Mrs. P.'s the Bishop of Peterborough (Hinchcliffe).

I have no care about enjoying undivided empire, nor any thoughts of disputing it with Mrs. Montagu.

She considers her title as indisputable most probably, though I am sure I never heard her urge it. Queen Elizabeth, you remember, would not suffer hers to be inquired into, and I have read somewhere that the Great Mogul is never crowned.

Apropos to gallantry, here is a gentleman hooted out of Bath for showing a lady's loveletters to him; and such is the resentment of all the females, that even the house-maid refused to make his bed. I think them perfectly right, as he has broken all the common ties of society; and if he were to sleep on straw for half a year instead of our old favourites the Capucin friars, it would do him no harm, and set the men a good example.

[" In the margin is written Mr. Wade."—*Hayward.*]

" Gluttony is, I think, less common among women than among men. Women commonly eat more sparingly, and are less curious in the choice of meat; but if once you find a woman gluttonous, expect from her very little virtue. Her mind is enslaved to the lowest and grossest temptation.

" Of men, the examples are sufficiently common. I had a friend, of great eminence in the learned and the witty world, who had hung up some pots on his wall to furnish nests for sparrows. The poor sparrows, not knowing his character, were seduced by the convenience, and I never heard any man speak of any future enjoyment with such contortions of delight as he exhibited, when he talked of eating the young ones."—*Johnson.*

[The name of Isaac Hawkins Browne[1] is written in the margin, and it is added that the young sparrows were eaten in a pie.—*Hayward.*]

"DEAR SIR,—Communicate your letters regularly. Your father's inexorability not only grieves but amazes me. He is your father. He was always accounted a wise man; nor do I remember any thing to the disadvantage of his good nature; but in his refusal to assist you, there is neither good nature, fatherhood, nor wisdom."—*Johnson.*

I think you will be surprised to hear that this so serious letter should have been written to the crazy fellow, of whom a ludicrous story is told in the *Anecdotes*: Joe Simson, as Dr. Johnson called him, when he related the ridiculous incidents of his marriage, his kept mistress, his footman, and himself all getting so drunk with the nuptial bowl of punch, purchased with borrowed money, that the hero of the tale tumbled down stairs and broke his leg or arm, I forget which, and sent for Dr. Johnson to assist him.

He had another friend of much the same description, though this gentleman was a lawyer: the other a poet. . . . Boyce[2] was the author of some pretty things in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, and Johnson showed me the following verses in manuscript, which I translated: but which are not half so pleasant as was his account

[1] Isaac Hawkins Browne, the elder (1705–1760), wit and poet, author of *The Pipe of Tobacco*, a series of clever parodies.

[2] Samuel Boyse (1708–1749), minor poet, author of *The Deity*, etc.

of Mr. Boyce lying a-bed: not for lack of a shirt, because he seldom wore one, supplying the want with white paper wristbands: but for want of his scarlet cloak, laced with gold, his usual covering, which lay unredeemed at the pawnbroker's. The verses were addressed to Cave,[1] of St. John's Gate, who saved him from prison *that* time at least:—

"Hodie, teste Cœlo summo,
Sine pane, sine nummo;
Sorte positus infeste
Scribo tibi dolens mæste:
Fame, bile, tumet jecur,
Urbane![2] mitte opem precor:
Tibi enim cor humanum
Non à malis alienum;
Mihi mens nec male grato,
Pro a te favore dato.
Ex gehennâ debitoria,
Vulgò, domo spongiatoria."

O witness Heaven for me this day
That I've no pelf my debts to pay:
No bread, nor halfpenny to buy it,
No peace of mind or household quiet.
My liver swell'd with bile and hunger
Will burst me if I wait much longer.
Thou hast a heart humane they say,
O then a little money—pray.

[1] Edward Cave, founder of the *Gentleman's Magazine* in 1731.

[2] Cave's editorial pseudonym was "Sylvanus Urban."

Nor further press me on my fate
And fix me at the begging gate:
Sufficient in this hell to souse
Vulgarly called a sponging house.

Of this curious creature I have heard Johnson tell how he remained fasting three whole days: and at the end when his consoling friend brought him a nice beefsteak, how he refused to touch it till the dish (he had no plate) had been properly rubbed over with *shalot*. "What inhabitants this world has in it!"

"You were kind in paying my forfeits at the club; it cannot be expected that many should meet in the summer, however they that continue in town should keep up appearances as well as they can. I hope to be again among you."—*Johnson*.

There is a story of poor dear Garrick, whose attention to his money-stuff never forsook him—relating that when *his* last day was drawing to an end, *he* begged a gentleman present to pay his club forfeits, "and don't let them cheat you," added he, "for there cannot be above nine, and they will make out ten."

MARGINAL NOTES ON WRAXALL'S *HISTORICAL MEMOIRS OF MY OWN TIME*

I SEND Wraxall[1] with the quartos, that you may read something written *of* your poor friend as well as something written *by* her. His book will be a relief when you get into the dark ages of "Retrospection."—*Mrs. Piozzi to Sir James Fellowes.*

Her note on Wraxall's statement relating to Marie Antoinette's first confinement is:

You see how cautious Sir N. Wraxall is—but you may likewise see through his caution. *He* knew no doubt better than myself, that about this time a swathed baby made of white marble was laid at the bed chamber door with this inscription:

"Je ne suis point de Cire—subintelligitur Sire—
Je suis de pierre—subintelligitur Pierre."

A Life-Guard Man as I was informed.[2]

[1] Sir Nathaniel William Wraxall (1751–1831), returned to England from service with the East India Company in 1772; published his Historical Memoirs of the years 1772–84 in 1815.

[2] [Recent and impartial history favours the belief in Marie Antoinette's personal purity; but her indiscretion was of a nature to give rise to the coarsest scandal amongst a people whose loyalty was rapidly declining into a diametrically opposite train of feelings. In the following epigram the speakers are the Queen and Mlle.

The Dauphin, who died very young, and the other who lived to suffer still more—whom every one pities, are mentioned in the 2nd vol., but I can't find the place now. Ils étoient *vrais Descendans* de Louis XIV., mais comment? Juste Ciel!

Verses quoted by Mrs. Piozzi as illustrating Wraxall's comments on the famous women of his time.

THE PLANETS.

(Said to be written by Charles Fox.) [1]

With Devon's girl so blithe and gay,[2]
I well could like to sport and play;
With Jersey would the time beguile,
With Melbourne titter, sneer and smile,
With Bouverie one would wish to sin,
With Damer I could only grin:
But to them all I'd bid adieu,
To pass my life and think with Crewe.

d'Oliva, the courtesan who personated her Majesty in the affair of the Diamond Necklace:

"Vile espèce, ose tu bien
Jouer le rôle d'une reine?
Pourquoi non, ma Souveraine,
Vous jouez souvent le mien." (Hayward.)

[1] In the Album at Crewe Hall. (Hayward.)

[2] Georgiana Cavendish, Duchess of Devonshire, 1774; wife of George Bussy Villiers, fourth Earl of Jersey; wife of Penistone Lamb, first Viscount Melbourne; wife of the third Earl of Radnor; the Hon. Anne Seymour Damer, Horace Walpole's cousin; Frances Anne Crewe, a daughter of Fulke Greville, married Lord Crewe, 1776.

THE PLEIADES.

(Said to be written by Mr. Chamberlayne, who threw himself out of the window.)

With charming Cholmondeley[1] well one might
Pass half the day, and all the night;
From Montague's[2] more fertile mind
Perpetual source of pleasures find:
Of Tully's Latin, Homer's Greek,
With learned Carter[3] one could speak;
With Thrale converse in purest ease,
Of letters, life, and languages.
But if I dare to talk with Crewe;
My ease, my peace, my heart adieu!

Sweet Greville![4] whose too feeling heart
By love was once betrayed,
With Sappho's ardour, Sappho's art,
For cool indifference prayed:[5]
Who can endure a prayer from you
So selfish and confined?
You should—when you produced a Crewe,
Have prayed for all mankind.

[1] Mary Woffington, sister of "Peg," wife of Rev. R. Cholmondeley. A noted blue-stocking.

[2] Mrs Elizabeth Montagu, (1720–1800), the "Queen of the Blues."

[3] Johnson's friend, Elizabeth Carter (1717–1806), the most scholarly of all the "blues."

[4] The mother of Lady Crewe, herself famed for beauty and wit. "His [Fulke Greville's] wife and daughter were and are the two greatest beauties in England, and Mrs. Greville is my godmother." (Fanny Burney's *Early Diary*.)

[5] Her chief poem was an "Ode to Indifference," and Fulke's conduct is reputed to have inspired it. Miss Burney plainly hints so.

When the King of Sweden was murdered in a ball-room, by Ankerstroom, about the year 1792, there was a comically impudent caricature published representing George the Third, with a letter in his hand and a label out of his mouth, saying, *What, what, what! Shot, shot, shot!*[1]

"The last Princess of the Stuart line who reigned in this country, has been accused of a similar passion (for drink), if we may believe the secret history of that time, or trust to the couplet which was affixed to the pedestal of her statue in front of St. Paul's, by the satirical wits of 1714."—*Wraxall.*

Brandy-faced Nan has left us in the lurch,
Her face to the brandy-shop, and her —— to the church.

"The Countess Cowper was at this time distinguished by his (the Grand Duke Leopold's) attachment; and the exertion of his interest with Joseph the Second, his brother, procured her husband, Lord Cowper, to be created soon afterwards a Prince of the German Empire."—*Wraxall.*

She was beautiful when no longer a court favourite, in 1786. Her attachment was then to Mr. Merry, the highly accomplished poet, known afterwards by name of Della Crusca.[2]

[1] George the Third was a firm believer in Lewis Carroll's maxim,

What I tell you three times is true.

This is the foible over which Peter Pindar makes merry.

[2] See p. 53.

"In 1779, Charles Edward exhibited to the world a very humiliating spectacle."—*Wraxall.*

Still more so at Florence, in 1786. Count Alfieri had taken away his consort,[1] and he was under the dominion and care of a natural daughter, who wore the Garter, and was called Duchess of Albany.[2] She checked him when he drank too much, or when he talked too much. Poor soul! Though one evening, he called Mr. Greatheed[3] up to him, and said in good English, and a loud though cracked voice: "I will speak to my own subjects my own way, *sare.* Ay and I will soon speak to you, Sir, in Westminster Hall." The Duchess shrugged her shoulders.

"It was universally believed that he (Rodney) had been distinguished in his youth, by the personal attachment of the Princess Amelia, daughter of George the Second, who displayed the same partiality for Rodney, which her cousin, the Princess Amelia of Prussia, manifested for Trenck.[4] A living evidence of the former connexion existed, unless fame had recourse to fiction for support. But, detraction, in every age, from Elizabeth down to the present times, has not spared the most illustrious females."—*Wraxall.*

[1] Louisa, daughter of Gustavus Adolphus, left Prince Charles Edward in 1780 and lived with Alfieri.

[2] Caroline, his daughter by Clementina Walkingshaw.

[3] See p. 52.

[4] Friedrich Trenck, soldier, author, merchant, etc., incurred Frederick the Great's disfavour by his intrigue at the age of eighteen with the Princess Amelia.

ADMIRAL LORD RODNEY

After painting by
SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS

Meaning, I suppose, the famous Miss Ashe, who, after many adventures, married Captain Falkner of the Royal Navy. She was a pretty creature, but particularly small in her person. *Little* Miss Ashe was the name she went by, yet I should think Rodney scarce old enough to have been her father. Her *mother*, people spoke of, as with certainty.

THE LYTTELTON GHOST STORY.

"Lyttelton,[1] when scarcely thirty-six, breathed his last at a country house near Epsom, called Pitt Place, from its situation in a chalk pit; where he witnessed, as he conceived, a supernatural appearance."—*Wraxall.*

He *did* so:[2] but here the author must pardon me, and so must you, dear Sir, if I presume to say I can tell this tale *better*; meaning with more exactness, for truth constitutes the whole of its value.

Lord Westcote and Lord Sandys[3] both told it *thus*, and they were familiar intimates at Streatham Park—where now their portraits hang in my library.

Lord Lyttelton was in London, and was gone to bed I *think* upon a Thursday night. He rang his bell

[1] Thomas, second Baron Lyttelton (1744–1779), distinguished by the prefix "wicked."

[2] He was warned in a dream (24th Nov. 1779) that he would die in three days and this was exactly fulfilled.

[3] William Hay Lyttelton, first Baron Lyttelton of Frankley was created Lord Westcote in the Irish peerage. It was at Ombersley, the seat of Lord Sandys, that Johnson said he got for the first time as much wall fruit as he liked.

suddenly and with great violence, and his valet on entering found him much disordered, protesting he had been, or had fancied himself, plagued with a white bird fluttering within his curtains. "When, however, (continued he) I seemed to have driven her away, a female figure stood at my feet in long drapery, and said 'Prepare to die, my Lord, you'll soon be called.' 'How soon? how soon?' said I, 'in three years?' 'Three years,' replied she, tauntingly, 'three days,' and vanished." Williams the man-servant related this to his friends of course; and the town talk was all about Lord Lyttelton's dream; he himself ran to his uncle with it, to Lord Westcote; who confessed having reproved him pretty sharply for losing time in the invention of empty stories (such he accounted it), instead of thinking about the speech he was to make a few days after.

Lord Sandys was milder; saying, "My dear fellow, if you believe this strange occurrence, and would have us believe it; be persuaded to change your conduct, and give up that silly frolic which you told us of. I mean going next Sunday—was it not? to Woodcote; but I suppose 'tis only one of your wondrous fine devices to make us plain folks stare: so drink a dish of chocolate and talk of something else."

On Saturday, after we had talked this over at Streatham Park, a lady late from Wales dropt in, and told us she had been at Drury Lane last night. "How were you entertained?" said I; "Very strangely *indeed*," was the reply; "not with the play though, for I scarce knew what they acted—but with the discourse of Captain Ascough or Askew—so his com-

panions called him—who averred that a friend of his, the profligate Lord Lyttelton, as I understood by them, had certainly seen a spirit, who has warned him that he is to die within the next three days, and I have thought of nothing else ever since."

No further accounts reached Streatham Park till Monday morning, when every tongue was telling how a Mrs. Flood and two Miss Amphlets, demirep beauties, had passed over Westminster Bridge by the earliest hour, looking like corpses from illness occasioned by terror, and escorted by this Captain Ascough to town. The man Williams' constant and unvarying tale tallied with *his*, who said, they had been passing the time appointed in great gayety; some other girls and gentlemen of the country having in some measure joined the party for dinner only, but leaving these before midnight. That on Sunday Lord Lyttelton drew out his watch at eleven o'clock, and said, "Well, now I *must*, leave you, agreeable as all of you are; because I mean to meditate on the next Wednesday's speech, and have actually brought some books with me." "Oh, but the ghost! the ghost!" exclaimed one of the Miss Amphlets laughing. "Oh, don't you see that we have *bilked the bitch*," says Lord Lyttelton, showing his watch, and running from them up stairs, where Williams had set out the reading table, etc., and put his master on the yellow night-gown, which he always used. Lord Lyttelton then said, "Make up my five grains of rhubarb and peppermint water and leave me; but, did you remember to bring rolls enough from London?" "I brought none, my Lord; I have found a baker here at Epsom that makes them just as your Lordship

likes"—describing how—and stirring the mixture as he spoke. "What are you using?" cries my Lord—"a toothpick!" "A clean one, *indeed*, my Lord." "You lazy devil—go fetch a spoon directly"; he did so; but heard a noise in the room and hastened back, to find his master fallen over the table, books and all. He raised him; "Speak to me, my Lord—speak for God's sake, dear my Lord." "Ah, Williams!" was his last and only word. Williams ran down to the dissolute company below, his watch in his hand. "Not twelve o'clock *yet*," he exclaimed, "and dead—dead."

They all bore witness that no violence came near the man, and I do *think* that some judicial process then proclaimed him—"Dead by the visitation of God." This, however, might be my hearing those words from friends and acquaintances relating the incident; but when it was reported twenty years after, that Lord Lyttelton committed suicide, I knew *that* was an error, or a falsity.

Of this event, however, few people spoke after the first bustle; and I had changed my situation and associates so completely, that it lay loose in my mind—never forgotten, though in a manner unremembered.

Chance, however, threw me into company of the gay and facetious Miles Peter Andrews,[1] with whom and Mr. Greatheed's[2] family, and Mrs. Siddons, and Sir Charles Hotham,[2] and a long et cetera, an entertaining day had been passed sometime in the year

[1] Gunpowder merchant, dramatist, wit, and M.P. (*d.* 1814).

[2] See pp. 52, 62.

MRS. SIDDONS

After painting by
SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS

1795, if I remember rightly ; and Mrs. Merrick Hoare,[1] assuming intimacy, said, "Now, dear Mr. Andrews, that the Pigous are gone, and everybody is gone but ourselves, *do* tell my mother your *own* story of Lord Lyttelton." He hesitated, and I pressed him, urging my long past acquaintance with his Lordship's uncles —the bishop and Lord Westcote. He looked uneasily at me, but I soothed, and Sophia gave him no quarter ; so with something of an appeal to her that the tale would be as she had learned it from her friends the Pigous, and from himself, he began by saying : "Lord Lyttelton and I had lived long in great familiarity, and had agreed that whichever quitted this world first should visit the other. Neither of us being sick, however, such thoughts were at the time of his death, poor fellow ! furthest from my mind.

"Lord Lyttelton had asked me to make one of his mad party to Woodcote or Pitt Place, in Surrey, on such a day, but I was engaged to the Pigous you saw this evening, and could not go. They then lived in Hertfordshire ; I went down thither on the Sunday, and dined with them and their very few, and very sober friends, who went away in the evening. At eleven o'clock I retired to my apartment : it was broad moonlight and I put out my candle : when just as I seemed dropping asleep, Lord Lyttelton thrust himself between the curtains, dressed in his own yellow night-gown that he used to read in, and said in a mournful tone, '*Ah, Andrews, it's all over.*' 'Oh,' replied I quickly, 'are you there, you dog ?' and recollecting there was but one door to the room, rushed

[1] Mrs. Piozzi's second surviving daughter, Sophia Thrale.

out at it—locked it, and held the key in my hand, calling to the housekeeper and butler, whose voices I heard putting the things away, to ask when Lord Lyttelton arrived, and what trick he was meditating. The servants made answer with much amazement, that no such arrival had taken place; but I assured them I had seen, and spoken to him, and could produce him, 'for here,' said I, '*he is*; under fast lock and key.' We opened the door, and found no one, but in two or three days heard that he died at that very moment, near Epsom in Surrey."

After a pause, I said very seriously to Mr. Andrews, "Were you quite sober, Sir?" "As you are now," replied he; "and I did think I saw Lord Lyttelton as I now think that I see you." "*Did* think, Sir? do you *now* think it?" "I should most undoubtedly think it, but that so many people for so many years have told me I did not see him," said he. We made a few serious reflections and parted.

"'A day or two before the 7th of June,'[1] said he, 'Count Maltzan, then the Prussian Minister at our Court, called on me, and informed me that the mob had determined to attack the Bank.'"—*Wraxall.*

The foreigners always obtain the first intelligence of everything. It was the Marquis del Campo who himself informed the Queen of Peg Nicholson's[2] attempt to assassinate George the Third. And one of

[1] June 7, 1780, the culminating day of the Gordon Riots.

[2] The housemaid that attempted to stab the King with a dessert-knife in 1786.

the Ministers of a foreign Court was first to learn the meditated escape of Buonaparte from Elba.[1]

"Suspicions were thrown on the Earl of Shelburne,[2] probably with great injustice. The natural expectation of producing a change in Ministry, was imagined to suspend or supersede in certain minds, every other consideration; and it was even pretended, though on very insufficient grounds, that Peers did not scruple to take an active part in the worst excesses of the night of the 7th of June."[3]—*Wraxall.*

A man remarkable for duplicity will be always suspected whether deserving suspicion or no. Gainsborough drew Lord Shelburne's portrait: my Lord complained it was not like. The painter said "*he* did not approve it, and begged to try again." Failing *this* time, however, he flung away his pencil saying, "D—— it, I never could see through varnish, and there's an end."

[1] This is far from clear. The Duke of Wellington told Rogers that *he* got the first intelligence from the English minister at Florence, the late Earl of Westmoreland, then Lord Burghersh. It is one of the most curious cases of conflicting evidence that can be named. See the *Edinburgh Review*, No. 227 (July 1860), pp. 235, 236. (Hayward.)

[2] Goldsmith's *Malagrida.* "Goldsmith's blundering speech to Lord Shelburne, which has been so often mentioned, and which he really did make to him, was only a blunder in emphasis:—'I wonder they should call your Lordship *Malagrida*, for Malagrida was a very good man.'"—(Boswell's *Johnson*, 1783.)

[3] It was a current story, which I have heard Lord Macaulay relate, that the late Right Honourable T. Grenville was with a party that broke into the Admiralty, and that the *second* time he entered it was as First Lord. (Hayward.)

"Sir Fletcher Norton,[1] though perhaps justly accused, as a professional man, of preferring profit to conscientious delicacy of principle; and though denominated in the coarse satires or caricatures of that day, by the epithet of 'Sir Bullface Doublefee'; yet possessed eminent parliamentary, as well as legal talents."[2]—*Wraxall.*

One of which I remember, except the second line, which is not exact:

"Careless of censure, and no fool to fame,
Firm in his double post and double fees;
Sir Fletcher standing without fear or shame,
Pockets the cash, and let's them laugh that please.

"So on a market day, stands Whatley's bear,
In spite of all their noise and hurly burley;
Fixed on his double post, secure in air,
Munching his bunch of grapes, and looking surly."

The Bear at Devizes was then kept by one Whatley, and stood upon a monstrous double signpost high up in the air, when some wag wrote these verses with a diamond on the window of an eating-room belonging to the inn. They were taken of course into everybody's scrap book, or everybody's memory.

[1] Speaker of the House of Commons, 1770; created Baron Grantley, 1782; attacked by Junius and many satirists and caricaturists.

[2] "Much may be done if a man puts his whole mind to a particular object. By doing so, Norton has made himself the great lawyer that he is allowed to be." (Boswell's *Johnson, sub anno* 1776.)

When the present King (George the Third) was quite a lad, there was a young fellow about the Prince's Court, who being thought natural son to my uncle Robert, was petted and provided for in some manner by the family, and used to visit familiarly at my mother's; who said that he told her how one day the two eldest boys were playing in the Princess's apartment, when the second said suddenly, "Brother, when you and I are *men grown*, you shall marry a wife and I'll keep a mistress." "What you say there? you naughty boy," exclaimed the mother; "you better to learn your pronouns as preceptor bid you; I believe you not know what it is—a pronoun."

"Be quiet, Eddy," says the King; "we shall have anger presently for your nonsense. Fletcher! (to my courtier cousin) give us the books." "Let them alone," cries Prince Edward; "I know what it is without a book: a pronoun is to a noun what a mistress is to a wife—a substitute and a representative." The Princess burst out o' laughing and turned them all out of the room.

Prince Edward was the Duke of York, who died at Monaco in Italy.

Mrs. Crewe and Mrs. Bouverie.[1]—The two fashionable belles about the Court and town had been painted by Reynolds in a character of two shepherdesses, with a pensive air as if appealing to each other, about the year 1770, or perhaps earlier; and there was written under the picture: "Et in Arcadia ego." When the Exhibition was arrranging, the members and their

[1] See p. 81.

friends went and looked the works over; "What can this mean?" said Dr. Johnson; "it seems very nonsensical—*I am in Arcadia.*" "Well! what of that! The King could have told you," replied the painter. "*He* saw it yesterday, and said at once, 'Oh, there is a tombstone in the back-ground. Ay, ay, death is even in Arcadia.'"

The thought is borrowed from Poussin; where the gay frolickers stumble over a death's head, with a scroll proceeding from his mouth, saying, "Et in Arcadia *ego.*"

'Tis said that those who seek *one* thing, often find a better which was not the primary object of their search. Queen Caroline looked for popular applause, and gained private esteem. In pursuit of her original desire to please every one who was presented, however, she made herself acquainted with the well-known events in English History; and having been told that a Derbyshire baronet, Sir Woolston Dixie, lived near the spot where Richard the Third lost his life and crown, readily adverted to that occurrence, and when *his* name was mentioned, said "Oh, Sir! it has been related to me your connexion with Bosworth Field and the *memorable battle* fought there." The gentleman's face, even redder than before, swelled with indignation, till at last he broke out with no very decorous vehemence of protestation, that all her Majesty had heard concerning it was false and groundless; and that he would find a way to make those repent who had filled the ears of his Sovereign with such gross untruths. "God forgive my great sin!" cried the

astonished Princess; and Sir Woolston Dixie left the drawing-room in an agony scarce to be described.

The misintelligence, as the French call it, was occasioned by the baronet's utter ignorance of historic literature. He was a brutal fellow, and having assaulted a tinker some day crossing Bosworth Field, the tinker laid down his tools and beat him severely; which his merry neighbours heard with pleasure, and called this luckless encounter, naturally enough, *The Battle of Bosworth*: while poor Sir Woolston, having never heard of any other contest in the place, except his own, made no doubt but that the Queen had heard of his disgrace, and took that opportunity to ridicule him for it.

I must add, that such instances of gross ignorance in country gentlemen were not—as now—incompatible with birth, rank, or fortune; I mean in the days when Caroline of Anspach canvassed her drawing-room at St. James's.[1]

Lady Archibald Hamilton formed during many years the object of Frederick's [2] avowed and particular attachment.

She was mother to Archdeacon Hamilton, who lived his last years and died in the Circus here at Bath. He was very unhappy in his family; and when *one* observed accidentally on *another* friend's ill-fortune—"has he three children?" says poor Hamilton; "and are they

[1] Miss Berry relates that Sir John Germaine left a legacy to Sir Matthew Decker, under the impression that he was the author of the Gospel according to St. Matthew. (Hayward.)

[2] Frederick Louis, Prince of Wales, the father of George III.

like mine?" His mother was the Delamira of the *Tatler*. His daughter is the Countess of *Aldborough*.

"The inglorious naval engagement in the Mediterranean, between Byng and La Galissoniere, for his conduct in which the former of those admirals suffered."—*Wraxall.*

See *Retrospection*, 2nd vol., page 423, near the bottom. I had more grace than to name my own father and uncle in a quarto volume meant for public view: but I may tell *you*[1] thus privately, and after more than half a century has past, how my uncle (who was then judge of the Admiralty) felt affected, when the old Duke of Newcastle wrung him by the hand and said, "My dear Sir Thomas, England has seen her best days. We are all undone. This d—— fellow has done for us, and all is over."

"The Treasury, the Admiralty, the War Office, all obeyed his (the first Pitt's) orders with prompt and implicit submission. Lord Anson and the Duke of Newcastle, sometimes, it is true, remonstrated, and often complained; but always finished by compliance."—*Wraxall.*

Their compliance was submission of the most unqualified kind, and the patience with which they waited in the ante-room, while Mr. Pitt was examining some machinery brought for his inspection by Nuttal the engine maker in Long Acre, was truly laughable.

[1] Sir James Fellowes, to whom were given her annotated copies of her own books except the "Travel Book," which was given to Conway.

"All circumstances fully weighed, my own conviction is, that the Letters of 'Junius' were written by the Right Honourable William Gerard Hamilton, commonly designated by the nickname of 'Single Speech Hamilton.'"[1]—*Wraxall.*

So it is *mine.* I well remember when they were most talked of—and N. Seward said, "How the arrows of Junius were sure to wound, and likely to stick." "Yes, Sir," replied Dr. Johnson; "yet let us distinguish between the venom of the shaft, and the vigour of the bow." At which expression Mr. Hamilton's countenance fell in a manner that to *me* betrayed the author. Johnson repeated the expression in his next pamphlet—and Junius *wrote no more.*

Lord Thurlow was storming one day at his old valet, who thought little of a violence with which he had been long familiar, and "Go to the devil, *do*," cries the enraged master; "Go, I say, to the devil." "Give me a character, my Lord," replied the fellow, drily; "people like, you know, to have characters from their acquaintance."

"The expression of his (the first Lord Liverpool's) countenance, I find it difficult to describe."—*Wraxall.*

It *was* very peculiar, but he was a delightful companion in social life. I know few people whose conversation was more pleasingly diversified with fact

[1] The famous single speech was made in 1755, when he was M.P. for Petersfield. The rest of his eloquence was given chiefly to the Irish Parliament.

and sentiment, narration and reflection, than that of the first Lord Liverpool.[1]

"'Charles Fox,' observed he (Mr. Bootby) 'is unquestionably a man of first-rate talents, but so deficient in judgment, as never to have succeeded in any object during his whole life. He loved only three things; women, play, and politics. Yet, at no period, did he ever form a creditable connexion with a woman. He lost his whole fortune at the gaming-table; and with the exception of about eleven months, he has remained always in Opposition.' It is difficult to dispute the justice of this portrait."—*Wraxall.*

He preferred Mrs. (now Lady) Crewe, to all women living, but Lady Crewe never lost an atom of character —I mean female honour. She loved high play and dissipation, but was no sensualist.

Lord Sandwich[2] came very early into a very small paternal estate; and his first entrance into life was marked by an apparently warm disposition towards virtue. He was, however, avowedly poor and proud; said that Sir Robert Walpole possessed no powers of gaining him over from the opposition party, whilst he was contented to live with the woman of his heart in a small house somewhere about Westminster, and *walk* to the House arm-in-arm with one friend, for whose

[1] Charles Jenkinson (1727–1808), held many high offices of state during a period of a quarter of a century. He was at one time master of the Mint, and wrote a standard work on *Coins of the Realm.*

[2] John Montagu, fourth Earl of Sandwich (1718–1792), First Lord of the Admiralty in 1748 and again in 1771.

LADY CREWE

After painting by
SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS

opinions he had the highest deference. Sir Robert laughed, and only said, "We shall see how all this ends."

The Countess, though forty-four years old when Lord Sandwich came of age and could not be persuaded to forbear pursuing her, brought him a son, which cost her future health, and with her health that flexibility of temper, which before marriage he deemed her possessed of. But,

> "To win a man when all our pains succeed,
> The way to keep him is a task indeed."

Virtue and sense were soon found insufficient, joined to a faded form and fretted mind, wherein resided sullen disapprobation of all that frolic playfulness to which her lord was naturally prone, and which his interested friend taught him to consider as innocent, even when combined with late hours, loose company, and sometimes higher play than he could afford; although Lord Sandwich never was a *rated* gamester[1] like Fox, or Fitzpatrick,[2] etc. Ill received at home, however, his pleasures drew him thence, and *they* growing hourly more and more expensive, as his friend's amusements were all placed to his account.

The Minister felt happy to provide for both, and this young nobleman owed to his wife's stern virtue, and his companion's insidious indulgences, a character

[1] His passion for play is immortalised in the word *sandwich*—a device of his invention to prevent the necessity of leaving the card-table for supper.

[2] Richard Fitzpatrick, the intimate friend of C. J. Fox. He was Secretary of War in 1783.

no man but Churchill could pourtray—no man, I hope besides himself, deserve:

"Is God's most holy name to be profan'd?
His Word rejected, and His laws arraign'd:
His servants scorn'd as men who idly dream'd,
His service laugh'd at; His dread Son blasphem'd?
Is science by a scoundrel to be led?
Are States to totter on a drunkard's head?
Search earth, search hell, the Devil cannot find
An agent like Lothario to his mind."

The end of such men (with regard to this life) is safer to imagine than describe. When talents, though they can't protect, reproach their mad possessors, and conscience, which congratulates the good man's exit, lighting his last steps with her hallowed taper:

"Turns to a fury with a flaming torch,
Quickly extinguished in mephitic gloom!"

Oh! let us, to use a phrase of Shakespear, *sweeten our imaginations*: and forgetting such characters, rather recollect Doddridge's Epigram upon his own motto:

"Dum vivimus, vivamus."

"Live while you live, the epicure will say,
And give to pleasure ev'ry passing day;
Live while you live, the sacred preacher cries,
And give to God each moment as it flies:
Lord! in *my* views, let both united be!
I live to pleasure whilst I live to Thee."

Now, as a note to the third or fourth line of Churchhill's verses, accept the following *true* anecdote:—

Lord Sandwich had trained up a huge baboon that he was fond of to play the part of a clergyman dressed in canonicals, and make some buffoon imitation of say-

ing grace. Among many merry friends round the table, sat a Mr. Scott, afterwards well known by name of Antisejanus;[1] but then a mere dependent servitor at college, and humble play-fellow of young Hinchinbroke.[2] The ape had no sooner finished his grimaces, and taken leave of the company, than Scott unexpectedly, but unabashed, stood up and said:

"I protest, my lord, I intended doing this duty myself, not knowing till now, that your lordship had so near a relation *in orders*."

I must add that Lord Sandwich praised his wit and courage without ever resenting the liberty.

He[3] had founded a society, denominated from his own name, "The Franciscans," who, to the number of twelve, met at Medmenham Abbey, near Marlow, in Bucks, on the banks of the Thames.

The best account of these horrors, and the least offensive, is in *Chrysal; or, the Adventures of a Guinea*, written by Smollet.[4]

[1] Chaplain to the Earl of Sandwich: "One of Lord Sandwich's hired and paid libellers," who "had by the pungent slang of his letters (signed Anti-Sejanus) raised the sale of the *Public Advertiser* from fifteen hundred to three thousand a day." It was this same Scott that invited Goldsmith to become a party hack and to his indignation and amazement met with a firm refusal. "And so I left him in his garret!"

[2] Hinchinbroke, the seat of the Earl of Sandwich in Huntingdonshire.

[3] This reference should be to Francis Dashwood, Baron Le Despencer (1708–1781), Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1762. Seven years before that he founded the Hell-Fire Club at Medmenham.

[4] For Smollett should be read Charles Johnstone, the author of this *chronique scandaleuse*, 1760–1765.

"Beauclerc[1] discovered him (Fox) intently engaged in reading a Greek Herodotus. 'What would you have me do,' said he, 'I have lost my last shilling!' Such was the elasticity, suavity, and equality of disposition that characterised him; and with so little effort did he pass from profligate dissipation to researches of taste or literature."—*Wraxall.*

I have heard this story before, and believe it is true. Topham Beauclerc (wicked and profligate as he wished to be accounted) was yet a man of very strict veracity. Oh Lord! how I did hate that horrid Beauclerc!

"If Burke really believed the facts that he laid down (regarding the American war), what are we to think of his judgment!"—*Wraxall.*

Burke troubled himself but little to think on what he had said; he spoke for present and immediate effect, rarely if ever missing his aim; because, like Doctor Johnson, he always *spoke his best*, whether on great or small occasions. One evening at Sir Joshua Reynolds' it was his humour to harangue in praise of the then ceded islands, and in their praise he said so much, that Mrs. Horneck, a widow with two beautiful daughters,[2] resolved to lose no time in purchasing where such advantages would infallibly arise. She did so,

[1] Johnson's friend, Topham Beauclerk, grandson of the Duke of St. Albans.

[2] Catherine ("Little Comedy") became the wife of the artist H. W. Bunbury. The younger sister, Mary (Goldsmith's "Jessamy Bride"), married Colonel Gwyn, and lived till 1840. Hazlitt met Mrs. Gwyn, and thought her still beautiful. "I could almost fancy the shade of Goldsmith in the room looking round with complacency."

and lost a large portion of her slender income. "Dear Sir," said I, when we met next, "how fatal has your eloquence proved to poor Mrs. Horneck!" "How fatal her own folly!" replied he; "Ods my life, must one swear to the truth of a song."

"It is difficult to do justice to the peculiar species of ugliness which characterised his (Dunning[1]) person and figure, although he did not labour under any absolute deformity of shape or limb."—*Wraxall.*

Sir Joshua alone could give a good portrait of Dunning. His picture of Lord Shelburne,[2] Lord Ashburton, and Colonel Barré,[3] has surely no superior. The characters so admirable, the likenesses so strong.

Wedderburn[4] was particularly happy when speaking of Franklyn, who (he said) the Ministers had wantonly and foolishly made their enemy. An enemy so inveterate, said he, so merciless, and so implacable, that he resembles Zanga the Moor, in Young's tragedy of the *Revenge*,[5] who at length ends his hellish plot by saying:—

> "I forg'd the letter, and dispos'd the picture,
> I hated, I despis'd, and I destroy."

The quotation struck every one.

[1] John Dunning, first Baron Ashburton (1731–1783).

[2] Sir William Petty, first Marquis of Lansdowne, second Earl of Shelburne (1737–1805).

[3] Isaac Barré (1726–1802), soldier and politician.

[4] Lord Chancellor (1793–1801), first Earl of Rosslyn, 1801.

[5] Edward Young's tragedy of 1721.

Benjamin Franklyn, who, by bringing a spark from Heaven, fulfilled the prophecies he pretended to disbelieve; Franklyn, who wrote a profane addition to the Book of Genesis, who hissed on the colonies against their parent country, who taught men to despise their Sovereign and insult their Redeemer, who did all the mischief in his power while living, and at last died, I think, in America; was beside all the rest, a plagiarist, as it appears; and the curious epitaph made *on* himself, and as we long believed, *by* himself, was, I am informed, borrowed without acknowledgment, from one upon Jacob Tonson,[1] to whom it was more appropriate, comparing himself to an old book eaten by worms; which on some future day, however, should be new *edited*, after undergoing *revisal* and *correction* by the *Author*.

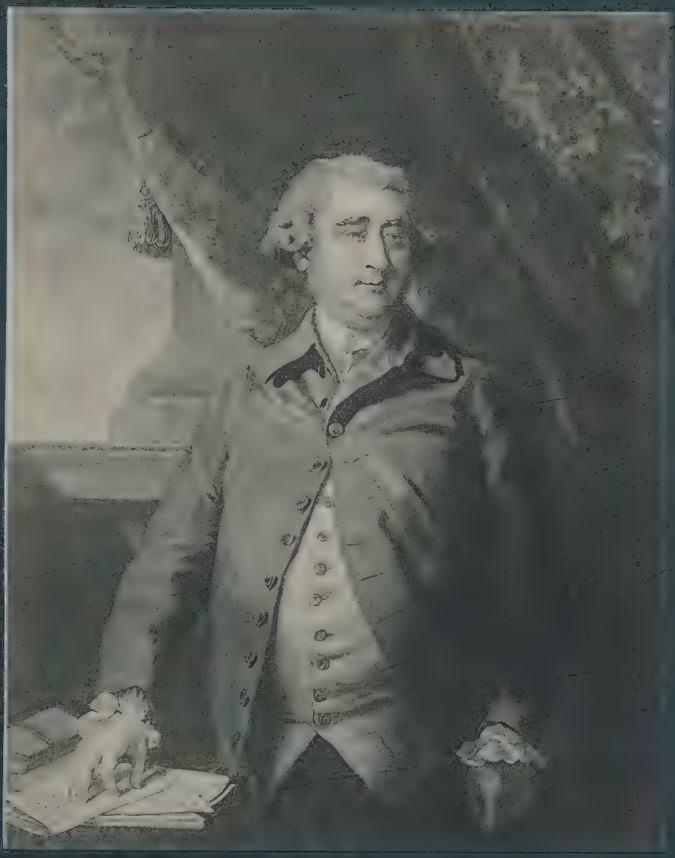
There are some exquisitely pretty stanzas, very little known, written by one Mr. Dale, upon Franklyn's invention of a lamp, in which the flame was forced downward, burning in a new discovered method, contrary to nature. I had a rough copy of the verses, and they lay loose in the second volume of *Retrospection*, but I suppose they dropped out, and I lost them, or they should have been written down here. I cannot trust my memory to do them justice. The first stanzas praise his philosophical powers:

> "But to covet political fame,
> Was in him a degrading ambition;
> 'Twas a *spark*, that from Lucifer came,
> And first kindled the blaze of sedition.

[1] The celebrated bookseller-publisher (1656–1736).

CHARLES JAMES FOX

After painting by
SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS



"May not Candour then write on his urn,
Here alas! lies a noted inventor;
Whose flame up to Heav'n ought to burn,
But *inverted*, descends *to the centre*." [1]

"Like his nephew, Mr. Fox, the Duke (of Richmond)[2] did not spare the King, when addressing the House of Lords; and he was considered as peculiarly obnoxious at St. James's."—*Wraxall.*

He never forgave the preference given by the King's *immediate advisers*,[3] when there was question of a Consort to the English Throne, where he hoped to see his beautiful sister (Lady Sarah)[4] seated—in vain! Lord Bute was too quick in providing a much safer partner.[5]

"Burke exclaimed, that 'he (Pitt) was not merely

[1] It is strange that she forgot to mention Turgot's famous motto for the bust of Franklin by Houdon:—

"Eripuit cœlo fulmen sceptrumque tyrannis."

Franklin's own criticism on it was that the thunder remained where he found it, and that more than a million of men co-operated with him in shaking off the monarchical rule of Great Britain. (Hayward.)

[2] Charles Lennox, the third duke (1735–1806), at one period of his political career a champion of universal suffrage and an ardent parliamentary reformer.

[3] The unpopularity of Lord Bute was without parallel. Chatham, in the House of Lords, referred to him as "the secret influence, more mighty than the throne itself, which betrayed and clogged every administration."

[4] Lady Sarah Lennox. "She had to figure as bridesmaid at her little Mecklenburg rival's wedding, and died in our own time a queer old lady, who had become the mother of the heroic Napiers." (Thackeray.)

[5] Princess Charlotte Sophia of Mecklenburg-Strelitz.

a chip of the old block, but the old block itself.'"—*Wraxall.*

Not *quite.* The *old* block's *head* was beautiful, and the eyes in it brilliant with intelligence.

I have seen Sheridan [1] (the father of R. B.) on the stage in former days, acting Horatio in Rowe's *Fair Penitent*, to Garrick's Lothario; but of his powers as a lecturer, Mr. Murphy [2] gave the most ludicrous account, taking him off with incomparable powers of mimicry—quite unequalled.

He (Lord Mulgrave) was a haughty spirited man, whom I should not suspect of any possible meanness, for any possible advantage. Rough as a boatswain,[3] proud as a strong feeling of aristocracy could make him, and fond of coarse merriment, approaching to ill-manners, he was in society a dangerous converser: one never knew what he would say next. "Why Holla, Burke! (I heard him crying out on one occasion) What, you are rioting in puns, now Johnson is away." Burke was indignant, and ready with a reply. But Lord Mulgrave drowned all in storms of laughter.

In reference to the "Optat Ephippia Bos piger" [4]

[1] Thomas Sheridan (1719–1788), manager of Theatre Royal, Dublin, actor at Covent Garden and Drury Lane, editor of Swift, and lecturer on elocution and education.

[2] Arthur Murphy, the editor of Fielding and the friend of Johnson. He was himself for some time an actor.

[3] Constantine John Phipps, Baron Mulgrave (1744–1792), commander of the polar expedition in which Nelson took part.

[4] The slow ox desires the trappings of the horse, and the pack-horse longs to plough. Horace, *Ep.* I. xiv. 43.

story of Lord Falmouth and Pitt, told by Wraxall, she writes :—

I have heard my father relate the story somewhat differently, but in substance the same. *He* said some wag chalked the words on his (Lord Falmouth's) door, and that, seeing them, he exclaimed, "he would give 100*l.* to know who wrote them." The first friend he met said, "Give *me* the money, Horace wrote them." Then comes the next mistake, "Horace! a dog, after all his obligations to me," [1] etc.

A similar story to this was related to me in Italy. Cardinal Zanelli was pasquinaded at Rome for his ingratitude to the Dauphin of France, whose influence, exerted in his favour, had procured him the dignity of Eminenza. Zanelli's coat armour was a *vine*; the statue [2] exhibited these words :—

"Plantavi *Vineam*, et fecit labruscas."

The enraged Cardinal, little skilled in Scripture learning, actually promised a reward to whoever would tell who wrote it. Next day Pasquin claimed the reward for himself, having marked under the words, 40*th chapter of Isaiah*.[3]

In this memorable year, 1782, the *Atlas* man-of-

[1] Confusing Flaccus and Walpole. [Lord Falmouth's name was *Bos*cawen, and he had just been soliciting the Garter. Hayward.]

[2] A mutilated statue discovered near the house of Pasquino, a Roman tailor of the fifteenth century famed for his powers of sarcasm, became the favourite place for the publication of libels and scurrilities against the Pope and cardinals.

[3] Isaiah v. 2.

war was launched, a three-decker of eminent beauty. We all know that the figure at the ship's head corresponds with the name, and I was informed that Hercules's substitute was a most magnificent fellow, fit to support the globe. When, however, they came to ship her bowsprit, he stood so high, that something was found necessary to be done; and the rough carpenter, waiting no orders, cut part of the globe away which stood upon the hero's shoulders. When it was examined afterwards, the part lost to our possession was observed to be *America*. Sailors remarked the accident as ominous, and the event has not tended to lessen their credulity.

When Montcalm was dying of his wounds in the great battle which deprived us of General Wolfe, "Well, well!" said he, "England has torn North America from *us*, but she will one day tear herself from the mother country. Once free from the *French yoke*, she will endure *no other*."

My father said those were his very words: my father died in the year 1762, but he always predicted American Independence.

"During his elder brother's life, when only Lord Harry Powlett, he (the Duke of Bolton)[1] had served in the royal navy, where, however, he acquired no laurels, and he was commonly supposed to be the 'Captain Whiffle' pourtrayed by Smollet, in his *Roderick Random*."—*Wraxall*.

I don't know whether this Lord Harry Powlett, or

[1] Duke of Bolton and Marquis of Winchester (1719–1794), Admiral of the Fleet 1770.

an uncle of his wearing the same name, was the person of whom my mother used to relate a ludicrous anecdote. Some lady with whom *she* had been well acquainted, and to whom his lordship was observed to pay uncommon attentions, requested him to procure for her a pair of small monkies from East India—I forget the kind. Lord Harry, happy to oblige her, wrote immediately, depending on the best services of a distant friend, whom he had essentially served. Writing a bad hand, however, and spelling what he wrote for with more haste than correctness, he charged the gentleman to send him over *two* monkies, but the word being written *too*, and all the characters of one height, *100*,—what was poor Lord Harry Powlett's dismay, when a letter came to hand, with the news that he would receive fifty monkies by such a ship, and fifty more by the next conveyance, making up the *hundred* according to his lordship's commands!

On this occasion (his victory over De Grasse in 1782) Rodney is said to have taught them the method of breaking the line, by which I have heard it asserted that Lord Nelson won all his victories by sea, and Buonaparte by land; but which is still a stranger thing, Lord Glenbervie[1] told me (and I believe him) that Epaminondas won the battles of Leuctra and Mantinea by the same manœuvre 2178 years ago.

"The Princess of Franca Villa was commonly supposed to have bestowed on him (Lord Rockingham)

[1] Sylvester Douglas, M.P. for Fowey, created Baron Glenbervie 1800.

the same fatal present, which the 'Belle Ferroniere' conferred on Francis the First, King of France; and which, as we learn from Burnet,[1] the Countess of Southesk was said to have entailed on James, Duke of York, afterwards James the Second."—*Wraxall.*

In Italy it was supposed to have been the succession powder mingled with chocolate whilst in the cake, not in the liquid we drink. Acqua Toffana,[2] and succession powder (*polvere per successione*) were administered, as I have heard, with certain although ill-understood effects. Lord Rockingham desired to be opened after his death, and was so.

"There was a number of Members who regularly received from him (Pelham's Secretary of the Treasury) their payment or stipend at the end of every session in bank notes."—*Wraxall.*

I am sorry to read these things of Mr. Pelham,[3] whom everybody loved, and Garrick praised so sweetly, saying:

"Let others hail the rising sun,
I bow to that whose course is run,
Which sets in endless night;
Whose rays benignant bless'd our Isle,
Made peaceful nature round us smile,
With calm but cheerful light.

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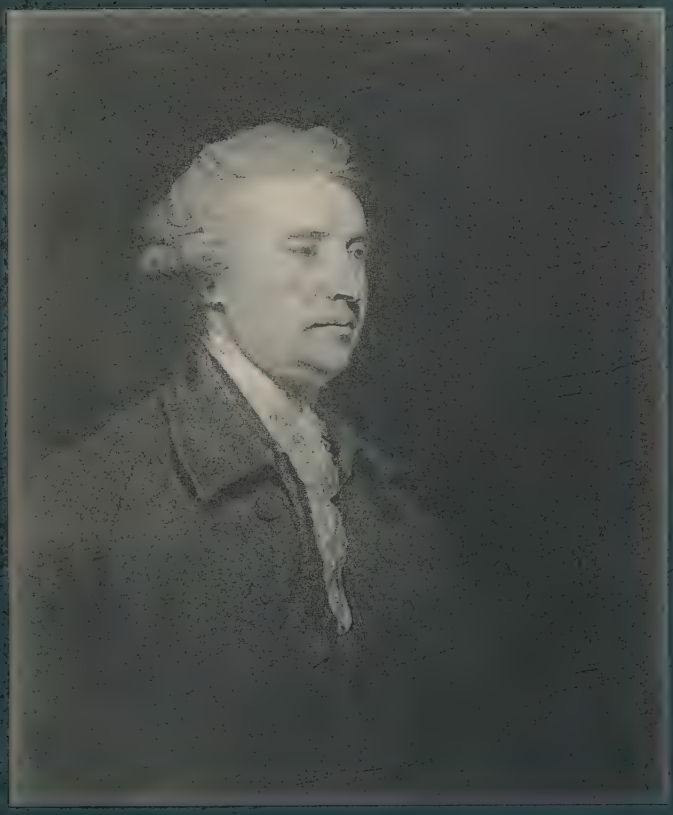
[1] The story is also told in Grammont's Memoirs. Burnet adds that Lord Southesk denied the share in the transaction attributed to his lordship. The story of La Belle Ferroniere is declared apocryphal by the author of *L'Esprit dans l Histoire.* (Hayward.)

[2] *Aqua Tufania*, a poison named after its Greek discoverer.

[3] Henry Pelham (1695–1754), brother of the Duke of Newcastle, Chancellor of the Exchequer (1743).

EDMUND BURKE

After painting by
SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS



"See as you pass the crowded street,
Despondence clouds each face you meet,
All their lost friend deplore.
You read in every pensive eye,
You hear in every broken sigh,
That Pelham is no more."

This ode,[1] from whence I have selected two stanzas, not the best, and a comical thing called *The News Writers' Petition*, that came out a very little while before, give one the impression of his having been a very honest man. I am quite sorry Wraxall's book tends so much to destroy that impression.[2]

Pelham's death was curious, and he thought so; for it was his favourite maxim in politics, never to stir an evil which lies quiet. "And now," said he, upon his death-bed to his doctor, "I die for having acted in contradiction to my own good rule—taking unnecessary medicines for a stone which lay still enough in my bladder, and might perhaps have never given me serious injury." But so it is, that though death certainly does *strike* the dart, it is often vice or folly poisons it—with regard to this world or the world to come.

[1] It was on the coincidence of his death (1754) occurring on the day when Bolingbroke's works were published. (Hayward.)

[2] Wraxall's assertions regarding Pelham's corrupt practice are admitted by historians.

MARGINAL NOTES ON BOSWELL'S *LIFE OF JOHNSON*

On the friendship between Warburton and Richardson:

"Very curious, and an odd friendship somehow between men so completely dissimilar. The elephant and zebra drawing together."

On a story of a clergyman preaching to convicts about to be hanged and promising them a continuation of his discourse:

"Like the hangman, who when some generous fellow gave him a guinea, cried out, 'Long life to your honour,' whilst he was tying the knot."

In reference to a parody of Johnson's style under the title of *Lexiphanes* (1767):[1]

"It vexed him, however, I well remember."

On the reported remark that no child has affection for a parent whom it has not seen:

"No—nor whom it *has* seen, I believe, except by chance."

Johnson to Boswell, 1772—'Mrs. Thrale loves you.'

"Not I. I never loved him."

[1] *Lexiphanes*, by Archibald Campbell, purser of a man-of-war and son of a St. Andrews professor.

Goldsmith and ghosts:

"Who would believe Goldy when he told of a ghost? A man whom one could not believe when he told of a brother. It is questionable now whether he had a brother or not."[1]

Boswell.—'Would not you allow a man to drink for that reason (to make him forget what is disagreeable)?' *Johnson.*—'Yes, Sir, if he sate next you.'

"Dr. Johnson said: 'The man compels me to treat him so.'"

'You continue to stand high with Mrs. Thrale.' —*Johnson to Boswell*, February 22nd, 1773.

"Poor Mrs. Thrale was obliged to say so in order to keep well with Johnson."

On the story of the retired tallow-chandler who begged to be allowed to return to his old shop on melting days:

"It was Murphy's story originally, who always told it of *dripping night*, instead of *melting day*."

On a passage in Johnson's letter, August 27th, 1775, to Boswell: 'She has a great regard for you.'

"Not I—never had: I thought him a clever and a comical fellow."

Johnson to Boswell.—'Have you no better manners? That is your want' (1770).

"*So it was.* Curiosity carried Boswell farther than it ever carried any mortal breathing. He cared not

[1] Boswell, plainly not a little ashamed of himself, tells the absurd story of Goldsmith's having boasted that his brother was Dean of Durham.

what he provoked so as he saw what *such a one* would say or do."

On the remark that Lord Lyttelton employed another man to point his history:

"Yes, a cork-cutter."[1]

Dr. Dodd:[2]

"If the King could have saved any man it would have been Ryland,[3] whom he personally loved; but having tried his interest for that man, 'Now,' said he, 'if I am ever solicited to pardon for forgery, you shall be made to remember these arguments.'"

On Boswell's remark that Pope's sorrowful reflection, that all things would be as gay as ever on the day of his death, is natural and common:

"I don't know how common, but not natural in the least to me. I am glad other people go on if *I* am forced to stop."

On Johnson's declaration of readiness to sit up all night being called an animated speech from a man of sixty-eight:

"Not from Johnson, who delighted to sit up all night and lie in bed all day."

[1] *History of the Life of Henry the Second* (1767), by the first Lord Lyttelton. The first and the second editions were punctuated by a hack writer, Andrew Reid; the third, Johnson says, by an ex-combmaker.

[2] Johnson drew up a petition for Dr. William Dodd, at one time a royal chaplain, who was executed in 1777 for forging the signature of Lord Chesterfield.

[3] William Wynne Ryland, Engraver to the King, was hanged for forgery in 1783.

Johnson to Boswell.—'I will not be put to the question. . . . These are not the manners of a gentleman.'

"'I have been put so to the question by Bozzy, this morning,' said Dr. Johnson, one day, 'that I am now panting for breath.' 'What sort of questions did he ask, I wonder?' 'Why, one question was:—"Pray, Sir, can you tell why an apple is round and a pear pointed?" Would not such talk make a man hang himself?'"

Pennant has the true spirit of a gentleman.—*Boswell.*

"So he has. I wish he had the style of a gentleman; but his perverse imitation of countinghouse brevity, leaving the personal pronoun out so perpetually, teazes a reader more than one could imagine. His style resembles a letter in the *Spectator* recommending Whittington to the Temple of Fame."

On Boswell's saying that Mrs. Piozzi had mistaken *sutile* for *futile* in Johnson's description of the needlework of Mrs. Knowles:[1]

"It was no mistake. As pictures they are futile; so are Miss Linwood's.[2] The moth, the sunshine, everything may destroy the beautiful work. Alas![3]

[1] Mrs. Knowles (*d.* 1807), a Quaker lady famous for artistic needlework. She wrote an account of a dialogue with Johnson which was rejected by Boswell.

[2] Mary Linwood (*d.* 1845), a musical composer and designer of pictures in worsted.

[3] Dr. Lort, writing to Bishop Percy, says: "I take for granted that you have read Dr. Johnson's Correspondence, published by

On Boswell's fearing to go into a state of being in which Shakespeare's poetry did not exist.

"And Virgil's sacred work shall die," says Cowley. "I am not so sure, however, that we may not repeat Virgil, as I am that we shall not see the pictures of Raphael and Correggio. They *must* be taken from us I fear. The verses may be remembered."

A new thought is a very uncommon thing in conversation, even of witty men.—*Johnson.*

"A new thought is like a new coin, and has more glitter but not more weight than the expression we have long been used to."

'Querulousness of old age.' (Malone, as quoted by Boswell).

"Was not Johnson querulous? In whom else would such querulousness have been endured?"

On Johnson's saying of Beauclerc,[1] 'No man was ever so free, when he was going to say a good thing, from a look that expressed that it was coming; or,

Mrs. Piozzi: and though you might not have been sorry to have read the whole, yet I wish, for the Doctor's sake, that only half of it had been printed. In one letter it is said, 'I have seen Mrs. Knowles, the quaker, and her *futile* pictures'; it should be *sutile*, a word, though not to be found in his Dictionary, yet very aptly made to express the mode of painting, viz. in needlework, of which sort there are two portraits of the king and queen made by Mrs. Knowles at Buckingham House. I desired a sight of the original letter in order to determine a wager. There it plainly appeared that a dash had been put across the long *s*, Johnson's usual mode of writing that letter, perhaps by the printer or corrector of the press." (Hayward.)

[1] Topham Beauclerk, grandson of the Duke of St. Albans, and one of Johnson's best-loved younger friends.

when he had said it, from a look that expressed that it had come.'

"Yes, Beauclerc was first upon the languid list of *Ton* people. Dr. Johnson, who was all emphasis himself, felt *épris* of such a character: a man of quality who disdained effect in conversation, to which *he* never came unprepared."

You must not expect that I should tell you anything, if I had anything to tell.—*Johnson to Boswell*, July 13th, 1779.

"Very true; he never did tell him anything for fear of misrepresentation."

On Johnson's remark that a father had no right to control the inclinations of his daughter in marriage:

"Some of his auditors [1] were, however, of opinion that children might control their parents in marriage."

It is in expectation of a return that parents are so attentive to their children.—*Boswell.*

"They must be silly parents sure, of no experience at all—Scotch parents attentive to interest even whilst fondling their babies. What nonsense!"

As to beggars asking more readily from men than from women.—*Johnson*, as reported by Langton.

"The man has more money in his pocket, and his money is his own. The woman is commonly responsible for *her* expenses to a father, a brother, or a husband. She must give in her account on Monday evening, and mention the shilling given to the beggar,

[1] The remark was made at the breakfast-table at Streatham before the future rebels.

for doing which she will receive a cheque and be told it was ill-bestowed."

The author of *Night Thoughts* and his son:

"A parent that he, the young man, hated. Addison and Young knew too much of life to be favourites with their families."

On Palmer's return from transportation:

"When Margaret came home safe, and his old cat which he took out to exile with him, I know not who told me the cat recognised her original habitation."[1]

To Chinese vaunting, a common sailor retorted: "And yet, though you have been pouring out tea ever since the Flood, you never had skill to make a spout to your teapot till we taught you how."

He (Johnson) had projected a work to show how small a quantity of REAL FICTION there is in the world.—*Boswell.*

"That would have been pretty. Johnson used to say that he believed no combination could be found, and few sentiments, that might not be traced to Homer, Shakespeare, and Richardson."

In the meantime let us be kind to one another.—*Johnson to Dr. Taylor.*[2]

"To whom he perpetually turned—not to his

[1] T. F. Palmer was a Fellow of Queens' College, Cambridge. He became a Unitarian minister at Dundee, and was involved in some treasonable printing for which he was sentenced to twelve years at Botany Bay. He died on his way home.

[2] John Taylor, friend and schoolfellow of Johnson (1711–1788). His published sermons were ascribed to Johnson.

flatterers and admirers. Ever sighing for the toast, bread and butter of life, when satiated with the turtle and Burgundy of it."

On Boswell's account of Mr. Thrale's pedigree (*sub anno* 1765):

"Edmund Halsey was son to a miller at St. Albans, with whom he quarrelled, like Ralph in the *Maid of the Mill*,[1] and ran away to London with a very few shillings in his pocket. He was eminently handsome, and old Child of the Anchor Brewhouse, Southwark, took him in as what we call a broomstick clerk, to sweep the yard, etc. Edmund Halsey behaved so well he was soon preferred to be a house-clerk, and then, having free access to his master's table, married his only daughter, and succeeded to the business upon Child's demise. Being now rich and prosperous, he turned his eyes homewards, where he learned that sister Sukey had married a hardworking man at Offley in Hertfordshire, and had many children. He sent for one of them to London (my Mr. Thrale's father); said he would make a man of him, and did so: but made him work very hard, and treated him very roughly, Halsey being more proud than tender, and his only child, a daughter, married to Lord Cobham.[2]

"Old Thrale, however, as these fine writers call him,[3] —then a young fellow, and, like his uncle, eminent for personal beauty,—made himself so useful to Mr. Halsey that the weight of the business fell entirely

[1] Isaac Bickerstaff's play of 1765.

[2] Sir Richard Temple, Viscount Cobham (1669–1749).

[3] Boswell calls him so.

on him; and while Edmund was canvassing the borough and visiting the viscountess, Ralph Thrale was getting money both for himself and his principal: who, envious of his success with a wench they both liked but who preferred the young man to the old one, died, leaving him never a guinea, and he bought the brewhouse of Lord and Lady Cobham, making an excellent bargain, with the money he had saved."

Johnson had a very sincere esteem for Mr. Thrale as a man of excellent principles, a good scholar, well skilled in trade, of a sound understanding, and of manners such as presented the character of a plain, independent English Squire.—*Boswell.*

"No, no! Mr. Thrale's manners presented the character of a gay man of the town: like Millamant, in Congreve's comedy,[1] he abhorred the country and everything in it."

On a couplet in *The Vanity of Human Wishes*:—

> "Through all his veins the fever of renown
> Spreads from the strong contagion of the gown."

He had desired me to change *spreads* into *burns*.—*Boswell.*

"Every fever burns I believe; but Bozzy could think only on Nessus' dirty shirt, or Dr. Johnson's."

Probably this alteration in dress [new silver buckles] had been suggested by Mrs. Thrale, by associating with whom his external appearance was much improved.—*Boswell.*

"It was suggested by Mr. Thrale, not by his wife."

[1] *The Way of the World*, 1700.

JAMES BOSWELL

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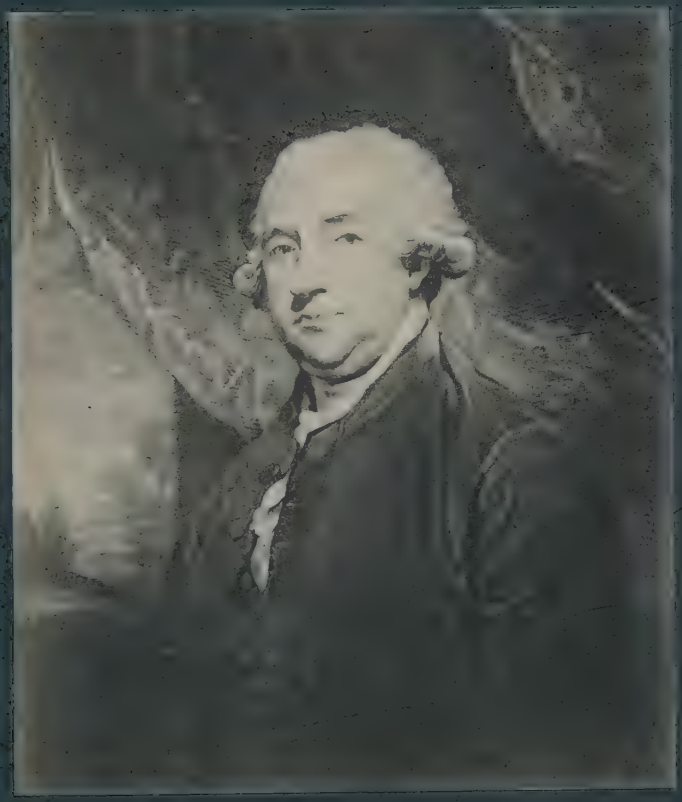

A dog will take a small bit of meat as readily as a large, when both are before him.—*Johnson, apud Boswell.*

"Which Johnson would never have done."

No man ate more heartily than Johnson, or loved better what was nice and delicate.—*Boswell.*

"What was gustful rather: what was strong that he could taste it, what was tender that he could chew it."

In the life of Lyttelton Johnson seems to have been not favourably disposed towards that nobleman. Mrs. Thrale suggests that he was offended by Molly Aston's[1] preference of his lordship to him.—*Boswell.*

"I never said so. I believe Lord Lyttelton and Molly Aston were not acquainted. No, no; it was Miss Boothby[2] whose preference he professed to have been jealous of, and so I said in the *Anecdotes*."

'Pray, sir,' said Lord Charlemont,[3] 'is it true that you are taking lessons of Vestris?'[4] This was

[1] A Lichfield friend for whom Johnson entertained a great admiration. Her letters, he told Mrs. Thrale, would be the last he would destroy.

[2] Miss Hill Boothby, whose correspondence with Johnson was published in 1805.

[3] James Caulfeild, created Earl of Charlemont 1763. He took a leading part in the Irish Volunteer movement of 1782. From 1764 to 1773 he was living in London, and a welcome guest in the Johnson circle.

[4] The famous dancer (1729–1808) who boasted, "Europe contains only three truly great men—myself, Voltaire, and Frederick of Prussia."

risking a good deal, and required the boldness of a general of Irish volunteers to make the attempt. Johnson was at first startled, and in some heat answered, 'How can your lordship ask so simple a question?'—*Boswell.*

"Was he not right in hating to be so treated? and would he not have been right to have loved me better than any of them because I never did make a Lyon of him?"

I cannot withhold from Mrs. Thrale the praise of being the author of that admirable poem 'The Three Warnings.'[1]—*Boswell.*

"How sorry he is!"

At a later period of his life, when Sir Joshua Reynolds told him that Mr. Edmund Burke had said that if he had come early into Parliament he certainly would have been the greatest speaker that ever was there, Johnson exclaimed, 'I should like to try my hand now' . . . I cannot help wishing that he *had* 'tried his hand in Parliament'; and I wonder that the ministry did not make the experiment.—*Boswell.*

"Boswell had leisure for curiosity: Ministers had not. Boswell would have been equally amused by his failure as by his success; but to Lord North there would have been no joke at all in the experiment ending untowardly."

'Wales, so far as I have yet seen of it, is a very beautiful and rich country, all enclosed and planted.' (Johnson, *Letter to Levet, apud* Boswell 1774.)

[1] See Appendix.

"Yet, to please Mr. Thrale, he feigned abhorrence of it."

I was not pleased that his (Johnson's) intimacy with Mr. Thrale's family, though it no doubt contributed much to his comfort and enjoyment, was not without some degree of restraint: not, as has been grossly suggested, that it was required of him as a task to talk for the entertainment of them and their company; but that he was not quite at his ease.—*Boswell.*

"What restraint can he mean? Johnson kept every one else under restraint. I do not believe it ever was suggested."

I found on visiting Mr. Thrale that he was now very ill, and had removed, I suppose by the solicitation of Mrs. Thrale, to a house in Grosvenor Square.—*Boswell.*

"Spiteful again! He went by direction of his physicians where they could easiest attend to him."

Johnson mentioned to him (Reynolds) that he had been told by Taylor[1] he was to be his heir.—*Boswell.*

"His fondness for Reynolds, ay, and for Thrale, had a dash of interest to keep it warm."

Johnson wishing to unite himself with this rich widow (Mrs. Thrale), was much talked of, but I believe without foundation.—*Boswell.*

"I believe so, too!!"

I had before dinner repeated a ridiculous story told me by an old man, who had been a passenger with me in the stage-coach to-day. Mrs. Thrale, having taken

[1] See p. 118.

occasion to allude to it in talking to me, called it, 'The story told you by the old *woman*.' 'Now, Madam,' said I, 'give me leave to catch you in the fact: it was not an old *woman*, but an old *man*, whom I mentioned as having told me this.' I presumed to take an opportunity, in the presence of Johnson, of showing this lively lady how ready she was, unintentionally, to deviate from exact authenticity of narration.—*Boswell.*

"Mrs. Thrale knew there was no such thing as an Old Man: when a man gets superannuated, they call him an Old Woman."

Mrs. Thrale, while supping very heartily upon larks, laid down her knife and fork, and abruptly exclaimed, 'O, my dear Johnson! do you know what has happened? The last letters from abroad have brought us an account that our poor cousin's head was taken off by a cannon-ball.' Johnson, who was shocked both at the fact and her light, unfeeling manner of mentioning it, replied, 'Madam, it would give *you* very little concern if all your relations were spitted like those larks, and dressed for Presto's supper.'—*Boswell.*

"Boswell appealing to Baretti for a testimony of the truth is comical enough! I never addressed him (Johnson) so familiarly in my life. I never did eat any supper, and there were no larks to eat."

Mrs. Piozzi has given a similar misrepresentation of Johnson's treatment of Garrick in this particular (as to the Club), as if he had used these contemptuous

EDWARD GIBBON

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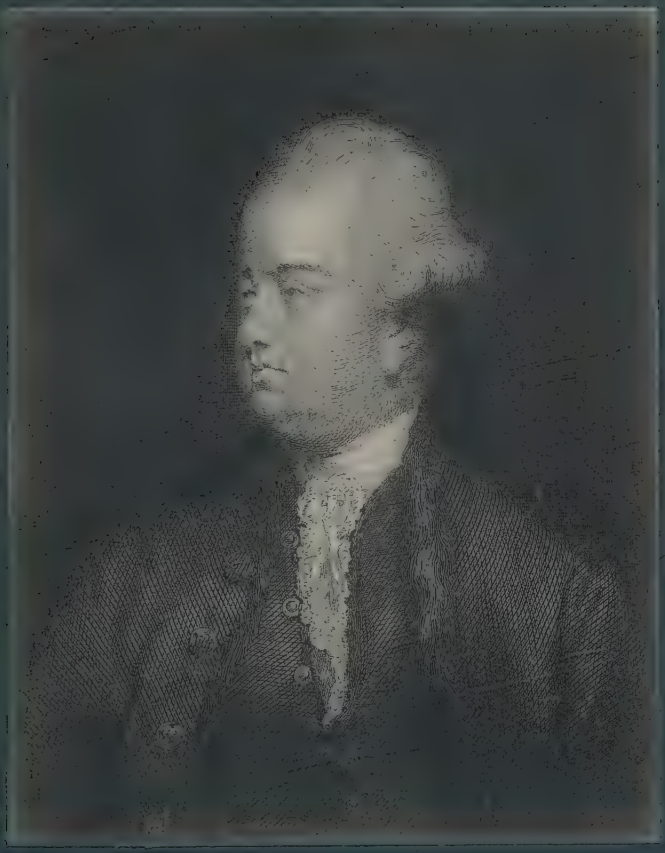
SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS



expressions: 'If Garrick does apply, I'll blackball him. Surely one ought to sit in a society like ours—

'"Unelbow'd by a gamester, pimp, or player."' (*Boswell.*)

"He did say so, and Mr. Thrale stood astonished."

'When,' said Johnson, 'I published the plan of my dictionary, Lord Chesterfield told me that the word *great* should be pronounced so as to rhyme to *state*; and Sir William Yonge sent me word that it should be pronounced so as to rhyme to *seat*, and that none but an Irishman would pronounce it *grait*. Now here were two men of the highest rank, one the best speaker in the House of Lords, the other the best speaker in the House of Commons, differing entirely.'—*Boswell.*

"Sir William was in the right."

On Johnson's doing penance at Uttoxeter:

"Very like a Romanist, but we must all go to the old shop for something."

MARGINAL NOTES ON JOHNSON'S *LIVES OF THE POETS*

IN 1636 he (Cowley) was removed to Cambridge.

"Nothing does so reconcile one to the laxity of all college discipline in *our* day, as the reflexion how sincerely it disgusted both Milton and Cowley in past times. Schools and colleges *now* neither instruct the young folk, nor offend them; but as Sir Joshua Reynolds said of his pupils, 'They may learn if they like; I throw every advantage in their way, and no hindrance.'"

"Of the verses (Cowley's) on Oliver's death, in which Wood's narrative seems to imply something encomiastic, there has been no appearance. There is a discourse[1] concerning his government, indeed, with verses intermixed, but such has certainly gained its author no friends among the abettors of usurpation.

"It is a discourse of energetic satire, and Burke was busy with this performance when he racked his own invention *raw* to find abuse enough for Warren Hastings."

He (Cowley) composed in Latin several books on plants.

[1] *Discourse by Way of Vision concerning the Government of Oliver Cromwell.*

"And this was the *Parent* of Darwin's late 'Loves of the Plants.'" [1]

On Cowley's letter to Sprat,[2] from Chertsey [giving a comical account of his misadventures in the country].

"Johnson has a *Rambler* imitated from this.[3] He loved to make retirement ridiculous."

In his (Cowley's) poem on the death of Hervey, there is much praise, but little passion.

"He does divert his sorrow by chusing incongruous images, but in this poem one may discern some truth of real concern.[4] I think it is the parent of Lord Lyttelton's monody to his wife."

The diction (of Cowley's Anacreontics) shows nothing of the mould of time. . . . Real mirth must always be natural, and nature is uniform. Men have been wise in very different modes, but they have always laughed the same way.

"I think *not*; I think national mirth a great discrimination of national character. Wisdom is dressed up alike by almost all. . . . One way of being wise, I think, and a thousand of being merry. . . . I felt *naturalized* in Italy many years after this note was

[1] There is no reason for doubting the complete originality of Erasmus Darwin's poem of 1789. Cowley would not have pressed the claim.

[2] Thomas Sprat, Bishop of Rochester, Cowley's first biographer.

[3] *Rambler*, 135.

[4] Johnson is unjust here as in the case of *Lycidas*. Cowley's tribute to his Cambridge friend is generally admitted to be, as Palgrave calls it, "a deeply-felt elegy."

written, when I could understand *their* jokes, and make them understand *mine*."

When Virgil describes the stone which Turnus lifted against Æneas, he fixes the attention on its bulk and weight:

> Saxum circumspicit ingens . . .
> Limes agro positus, litem ut discerneret arvis.

Cowley says of the stone with which Cain slew his brother:

> I saw him fling the stone, as if he meant
> At once his murther and his monument.

"I think that's as well; Virgil (full of his own Georgics) describes the agricultural use of the stone: Cowley feeling it would produce *death*, thinks of the *monument*."

Cowley says of the Messiah:

> Round the whole earth his dreaded name shall sound,
> And reach to worlds that cannot yet be found.

"*O'er* the whole earth would be better; *round* and *sound* and *found*, come too quick upon the ear to be sweet, and put one in mind of a man crying cherries."

I have formerly read, without much reflection, of the multitude of Scotchmen that carried their wares to Poland. (*Life of Denham.*)

"I can remember when every pedlar was called a *Scotchman* by servants, etc., probably by those of higher rank. . . . We children used to jump for joy, and cry, There's a *Scotchman* a coming, a *Scotchman* indeed, mamma."

Though with these streams he no resemblance hold,
Whose foam is amber, and their gravel gold,
His genuine and less guilty wealth to explore,
Search not his bottom but survey his shore.
Denham's *On the Thames.*

"Not less guilty, I think. . . . For Pactolus, etc., were *innocent* of all the frauds which commerce carries on upon the Thames, and their wealth was *genuine* too, his *accidental*."

He (Milton) left the University alienated either by the injudicious severity of his governors, or his own captious perverseness.

"The *first* of these I fear it was. . . . They have never whipt[1] a lad since, for fear of driving away a second Milton. . . . There was no danger."

The merchants informed him of plots laid against him by the Jesuits (at Rome). He (Milton) had sense enough to judge there was no danger.

"Of that I am not so confident: dear Dr. Johnson had never been at Rome, which was certainly no safe place for Puritanical opinions, even in 1740; what danger there was in 1640, Milton was right enough to shun. Handel, who was a Lutheran, not a Calvinist, found Italy a very troublesome residence on account of religion, tho' the Italians quite adored his talents, and loved his person. With how much more difficulty Milton got thro', H. L. P. can readily imagine."

Voltaire tells a wild and unauthorised story of a farce seen by Milton in Italy, which opened thus: 'Let the rainbow be the fiddle-stick of the fiddle of Heaven.'

[1] The story of the whipping derives from "a MS. jotting of the old gossip, Aubrey." (Masson.)

"A true one, I have no doubt.[1] A *bow* puts an Italian in mind of a fiddle, directly. *That* is exceeding comical indeed! and shews off *national character* to perfection. A ship in full sail puts an Englishman, Dryden, in mind that she may be fraught with all the *riches* of the rising sun, in one place; in another, it brings to his fancy a weaver and his loom. . . . When an Italian sees the *rainbow*, *his* imagination delights to have discovered a nice fiddle-stick for the fiddle of Heaven."

Dr. Johnson's sneering at Milton's belief that 'his vein never happily flowed but from the autumnal equinox to the vernal.'

"Violin players feel it above all other men."

To prove the paucity of readers, it may be sufficient to remark that the nation had been satisfied from 1623 to 1664, that is, forty-one years, with only two editions of the works of Shakespeare, which probably did not together make one thousand copies.[2]

"It *is* a proof, because if we read anything we read *Shakspeare*."

She, Milton's grand-daughter, knew little of her grandfather, and that little was not good.

"Those who wait on others, always, I believe, invariably complain of the people on whom they are dependant. This girl had heard Milton find fault with his dinner some day[3] when she wanted to be eating

[1] Andreini's drama *Adamo*, 1613.

[2] The second and third folios of 1632 and 1663–64. Johnson's estimate of the number is probably liberal.

[3] The girl (Milton's grand-daughter, Elizabeth Clark) could not have had this opportunity, as she was born in Ireland and came to London ten years after Milton's death.

her own, I suppose, and told of it. We learn from her report, that John Milton was delicate in his diet."

With these trifling fictions are mingled the most awful and sacred truths. (Johnson on *Lycidas*.)

"Milton had lived too much in Italy, and we must own Italian piety, tho' often fervent, is seldom delicate; nor do they consider as profane, what justly shocks a native of Great Britain."

Both his characters [1] delight in music.

"He loved Italian music, but Johnson had no notion of any music at all, unless perhaps a catch or hunting song; he would not else have called those *cheerful* notes, which Milton describes thus:

> 'With wanton heed, and giddy cunning,
> The melting voice through mazes running,
> Untwisting all the chains that tie
> The hidden soul of harmony.'"

But there is something wanting to allure attention. (Johnson on *Comus*.)

"It wants nothing to detain a *reader*; on the stage it is cold and declamatory. In *reading*, every line, every word tells, and I have heard Mr. Conway [2] *speak* the verses so as to enchain attention, and delight both eye and ear."

Milton has been censured by Clarke [3] for the impiety which sometimes breaks from Satan's mouth.

[1] *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*. [2] See note p. 27.

[3] Dr. Samuel Clarke (1675–1729), the distinguished moral philosopher.

"Satan's is not the most dangerous impiety. Satan is a fiend, and we expect no better from him; but I have lived to see, in the year 1818, an impious novel called *Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus*, who takes for his motto, Adam's mode of arraigning God Almighty in verse 743 of the 10th Book of *Paradise Lost*."[1]

But with guilt, enter distrust and discord, etc.

"And a spirit of fatalism. They turn metaphysicians direct, and Adam throws the blame of all upon his Maker. 'The woman that *Thou* gavest me,' etc."

His (Milton's) infernal and celestial powers are sometimes pure spirit and sometimes animated body.

"Stock of Killala[2] believed that angels were not wholly immaterial; *he* held that God alone could act without organs. 'The Almighty (said he) keeps that privilege to Himself.' . . . It may be so; but bishops should not learn their divinity from Milton."

The variety of pauses so much boasted by the lovers of blank verse changes the measures of an English poet to the periods of a declaimer; and there are only a few skilful and happy readers of Milton who enable

[1] Frankenstein (the central figure of Mrs. Shelley's novel of 1818) is a man-created monster. His attitude to his Creator is expressed in the Miltonic lines:

> "Did I request thee, Maker, from my clay
> To mould me Man?"

[2] Joseph Stock, Bishop of Killala 1798–1810, author of a *Life of Berkeley*, etc.

their audience to perceive when the lines end or begin.

"This I had the honour to tell Doctor Johnson; and I said: 'Quin the actor taught it *me*; and called it The Pause of Suspension.'"

It is scarcely possible . . . to image the tumults of absurdity and clamour of contradiction which perplexed doctrine, disordered practice, and disturbed both public and private quiet, in that age when subordination was broken and awe was hissed away. (Johnson on *Hudibras*.)

"How dreadful 'tis to think that I, who saw dear Dr. Johnson write *this* passage . . . lived long enough to witness the *truth* of this *passage* likewise . . . and how strange, that after such a storm, the present *temporary calm* should give me comfortable leisure to write this note."

One of the Puritanical tenets was the illegality of all games of chance. (Johnson on *Hudibras*.)

"Playing at cards is deemed no very small wickedness *now*, in the year 1815, by many grave people who call themselves Methodists, or whom we call so: I trust it is because they do not reflect on the emptiness of other amusements. Hot Cockles, or Hide and Seek, is, *per se*, no more innocent than a game at shilling whist. But they are all Democrates, and like to thwart the upper ranks of society, and leave the gin-drinkers and tobacco-smokers full liberty of gross enjoyment."

At Caen he (Lord Roscommon) is said to have had

some preternatural knowledge of his father's death. (Johnson's *Life of Roscommon.*)

"The only tale I ever could give credit to, of the odd kind of second sight, was a story related by a young woman, her name, Mann, who was Miss Hamilton's maid. 'I was when a girl,' said she, 'playing on the green with my companions one summer evening, when Sally Macdonald suddenly cry'd out, "Look, look! there's my father ahanging across the door." "What *door*?" replied I. There was no door in sight. "*His own*," answered the girl, and left off her diversion. We all continued ours, and thought no more about her, till in a week we heard the man had hanged himself on that very day. He lived seventeen miles off.' To this story I know not how either to grant assent, it is so strange, or to refuse belief, it is so artless."

The same year produced *The History and Fall of Caius Marius*, much of which is borrowed from the *Romeo and Juliet* of Shakespeare. (Johnson's *Life of Otway.*)

"Richardson quotes as Otway's lines verses now well known to be Shakespear's; but to Garrick, that mine of mercury striated with gold, we owe the revivification of Shakespear: tho' none of us had influence enough with Dr. Johnson to make him confess it, in his preface or his notes. . . . Mr. Thrale would not try; Garrick had refused him a favour. . . . He would not patronize Poll Hart, who afterwards married Reddish."[1]

[1] Samuel Reddish (1735–1785), a distinguished actor at Drury Lane and Covent Garden.

She (Lady Dorothea Sidney[1]) rejected his (Waller's) addresses with disdain.

"Ladies are much humbler in *these days.* A famous poet *now* with ten thousand o' year might choose among the lady Sophias and lady Dorotheas, I believe . . . but poets have no longer Dr. Johnson's aristocratic ideas about birth or rank, which he rates rather too high for any times; especially *rank*, which is a mere king's gift, and is often bestowed on very low mortals indeed."

'Waller,' says Clarendon, 'was so confounded with fear [after the discovery of his plot] that he confessed whatever he had heard, said, thought or seen; all that he knew of himself and all that he suspected of others.' (Johnson's *Life of Waller.*)

"What a mean fellow with his 10,000*l.* a year . . . had he never read *Tacitus* and his account of a woman's firmness in concealing the plot she was intrusted with, which no tortures could force her to discover, for fear of bringing the tyrant's not unjust wrath on her companions? a woman too of no good character for any virtue except fortitude! Oh, wretched Mr. Waller!!!"

Upon sight of the Duchess of Newcastle's verses on the death of a stag, he (Waller) declared that he would give all his own compositions to have written them, and being charged with the exorbitance of his adulation answered that 'nothing was too much to be

[1] "Sacharissa" married Henry Spencer, first Earl of Sunderland.

given that a lady might be saved from the disgrace of such a vile performance.' . . . Had his hypocrisy been confined to such transactions he might have been forgiven, though not praised; for who forbears to flatter an author or a lady? (Johnson's *Life of Waller.*)

"Not Doctor Johnson certainly. . . . When he flattered Mrs. Montagu, who showed him some old china plates that had once belonged to Queen Elizabeth, and he told her they had suffered little diminution of dignity in falling to *her.*"

That natural jealousy which makes every man unwilling to allow much excellence in another always produces a disposition to believe that the mind grows old with the body. (*Life of Waller.*)

"Johnson was very jealous of such sentiments towards himself: he used to quote Swift perpetually and say—

'Some dire misfortune to portend,
No enemy can match a friend.'

"I have seen friends who were *hoping* each other's decay—but they were *wits*, living in professed rivalry."

Fair Venus, in thy soft arms
The god of rage confine;
For thy whispers are the charms
Which only can divert his fierce design.
What though he frown, and to tumult do incline;
Thou the flame
Kindled in his breast cans't tame,
With that snow which unmelted lies on thine.
(WALLER.)

"It is a false sentiment: we never heard of Venus's snowy coldness before—as I remember."

LADY ELIZABETH MONTAGU

After painting by
SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS

It (*All for Love*) is by universal consent accounted the work in which he has admitted the fewest improprieties of style or character. (*Life of Dryden.*)

"His description of Cleopatra in her galley is the finest in the world—keeping clear of Shakespear all the time. Shakespear's description is put into the mouth of an indifferent spectator, Enobarbus: Dryden makes Antony himself the narrator, and dwells judiciously on the beauties of the lady, rather than the beauties of the show."

As he (Dryden) came out from the representation (of *Cleomenes*, 1692), he was accosted thus by some airy stripling: 'Had I been left alone with a young beauty, I would not have spent my time like your Spartan.' 'That, sir,' said Dryden, 'perhaps is true; but give me leave to tell you you are no Spartan.'

"The story is ill told . . . instead of Spartan read *hero*; and then italic the word *no* at last, and you preserve the point, which Johnson loses."[1]

It is certain that in one year, 1678, he published . . . six complete plays.

"Impossible!!! The man, veins, and bowels, must have been left wholly *empty*, writing as he did six plays in one year—what nonsense!"[2]

Though he (Dryden) was perhaps sometimes in-

[1] The criticism is based on a mistaken reading. Johnson's words are "give me leave to tell you that you are no hero."

[2] Johnson's error, Dryden's maximum being three plays in one year.

juriously censured [for plagiarism], he would, by denying part of the charge, have confessed the rest.

"Like Foote's cuckold in a storm, who begs his wife in that solemn moment to confess if she had ever been false to him. 'Sink or swim,' she replies, 'Mr. Paragraph, that secret shall perish with me.'"

He married the Lady Elizabeth Howard, daughter to the Earl of Berkshire, with circumstances, according to the satire imputed to Lord Somers, not very honourable to either party.

"I know not the story, but 'tis plain that Lady Eliz., tho' a person of *high birth*, is never charged with giving herself airs, like those of the Countess to Addison—tho' Addison was rich, Dryden poor, and the one ever dependent, the other Secretary of State."

Of the person of Dryden I know not any account.

"I read in a *Gentleman's Magazine* an account of Mr. Dryden dressed in a sword and a Chadreux wig, taking his favourite actress Nancy Reeve to the Mulberry Garden[1] and treating her with tarts. Query, what was a Chadreux wig?"

He called the two places (at Will's) his winter and his summer seat.

"Like old Goosey Evanson,[2] who shewed me two seats in his little garden, and said with much serious

[1] The Mulberry Garden was the most fashionable resort after the Restoration. It was on the site of Buckingham Palace.

[2] Perhaps Dr. Edward Evanson, theologian and schoolmaster, of Mitcham.

pomp: 'This I call my Allegro, and *this* my Penseroso,' a great thing indeed; but he was imitating Dryden."

The perpetual accusation produced against him was that of plagiarism.

"In Warton's notes to Pope's *Eloisa*, there is a little tale not new to me, told of a trick put upon Dryden by some wag, who translated *his* famous lines beginning, 'To die is landing on some silent shore,' etc., into Latin verses; old Leonine ones—as I remember; and pasting them at bottom of a hat box sent to his house, alarmed the old poet, who feared being in future considered as a Plagiarist; and was very angry . . . and now, 1817, Mr. Mangin[1] says the lines were not written by Dryden but by Garth.[2] Warton quotes Walter Harte[3] as author of the story. We are tempted to say with Pontius Pilate, Quid est veritas? and to reply anagrammatically. . . . Est vir qui adest!! I think truth is nowhere else."

Nor can the editors and admirers of Shakespeare . . . boast of much more than of having . . . changed Dryden's gold for baser metal, of lower value though of greater bulk.

"Dr. Johnson was very angry that he was not called upon by Garrick to write the (Shakespeare) ode, which for that reason *he* always ridiculed.

"When Garrick's ode was published, he printed all the testimonies to Shakespear's merits along with

[1] Edward Mangin (1772–1852), miscellaneous writer, author of *Piozziana*.

[2] The lines occur in Garth's *Dispensary*, canto 3, l. 225.

[3] Miscellaneous writer; Canon of Windsor, 1750.

the ode; I possessed, loved, yet lost it: like hearing different harpsichord players perform a favourite concerto, one was delighted with their different manners of doing the same thing. I used to think Dryden's praise grandest, Addison's neatest, and Dr. Johnson's gravest."

He (Dryden) translated the first book of the *Iliad* without knowing what was in the second.

"Like Mrs. Pritchard,[1] who, till late in life, never read more of *Macbeth* than *her own part*. She had not *time*, she told Dr. Johnson."

Of him that knows much it is natural to suppose that he has read with diligence: yet I rather believe that the knowledge of Dryden was gleaned from accidental intelligence and various conversations, by a quick apprehension, a judicious selection, and a happy memory, a keen appetite of knowledge, and a powerful digestion; by vigilance that permitted nothing to pass without notice, and a habit of reflection that suffered nothing useful to be lost. A mind like Dryden's, always curious, always active, to which every understanding was proved to be associated, and of which every one solicited the regard, by an ambitious display of himself, had a more pleasant, perhaps a nearer way to knowledge than by the silent progress of solitary reading.

"This is a portrait of Doctor Johnson's *own* mind and manners; I told him so, and he was not ill pleased."

[1] Hannah Pritchard, the greatest Lady Macbeth before Mrs. Siddons.

His style could not easily be imitated, either seriously or ludicrously; for being always equable and always varied, it has no prominent or discriminate characters.

"And it was Johnson's conversation opinion too. He liked Mr. Thrale, he said, because he had no *trick* about his manners, no emphasis in his talk; he could no more be *taken off* (as the phrase is) than Beauclerc; 'and what, Sir,' said I, 'do you think then of your favourite Burney?' 'Oh,' said he, 'Burney could not be taken off certainly, because *he* is *all trick*.'"

> The diligence of trades and noiseful gain
> And luxury, more late, asleep were laid. Etc.
> Dryden's *Annus Mirabilis*.

"This is a good *London* night . . . his night in the tragedy[1] so often and so justly admired, is a good *country* night, but Young's description suits every place and every season. It is the night of poetry and plainness, of ignorance and of philosophy . . . all are equally interested when they hear that

> 'Twas as the general pulse
> Of life stood still, and Nature made a pause;
> An awful pause, prophetic of her end.'[2]

A strange idea sure."

Pope represents him (Parnell) as falling from that time into intemperance of wine. (*Life of Parnell.*)

"I have heard Dr. Johnson say—what 'tis plain he would not *write*,—how Parnell could not get thro' a

[1] *The Indian Emperor.*
[2] Young's *Night Thoughts*, i. 23.

sermon without turning his head (even in the pulpit) to drink a dram."

He (Goldsmith) observes that the story of *The Hermit* is in More's *Dialogues* and Howell's *Letters*, and supposes it to have been originally Arabian.

"*The Hermit* (Parnell's) is a favourite with all readers. The first on't is in old Mahomet's Alcoran, it is in Howel's *Letters* too; . . . and one may trace the *old tale* in the *Spectator*."

The Fair Penitent . . . is one of the most pleasing tragedies on the stage. (*Life of Rowe.*)

"It should not have been seated in Genoa tho'—where such an outrage on a maiden lady scarce *could* have been committed, nor would ever have been thought on. Suicide likewise, and the odd composure with which Sciolto resolves to kill his daughter, are such *non-Italian* notions. The scene should in no wise have been placed in Genoa, where no young lady of fashion *can be got at*. They are all safe in nunneries till married, and *then* their husbands are most *willing* Altamonts. Jane Shore[1] is the true Fair Penitent, not Calista."

An Arbiter Elegantiarum, a judge of propriety, was yet wanting. (*Life of Addison.*)

"This phrase has been admired, adopted and quoted ever since these Lives came out; nor did I ever, till the 26th of April, 1816, see that it existed,[2] twenty years *before* these Lives came out, in Doctor Harrington's epitaph upon the celebrated Beau Nash

[1] Rowe's later tragedy.

[2] Nash's epitaph reads *Elegantiæ* as in Tacitus.

in the Abbey Church here. H. L. P. *Bath, 26th April*, 1816."

The *Spectator*, whom he (Swift) ridicules for his endless mention of the *fair sex*.

"Well! there *is* too much about the *fair sex*. I am as tir'd on't as Swift reading the papers over *now*.—1802."

Addison's *The Drummer*.

"It is a dull comedy, tho' every character is in itself a good one. It wants incident, and interest, and power to set 500 people o' laughing when together.[1] They would each of them be amused perhaps enough, reading it at home. A country gentleman, his lady and servants, are all the people engaged, except, indeed, my lady's two silly lovers, Fantom and Tinsel."

This year (1716) he (Addison) married the Countess Dowager of Warwick.

"This lady was a Cambro Briton, and I suppose absurdly proud of her family, tho' it was not a high one. As to being Countess of Warwick, her maid might have been Countess had an Earl married her. So I see little sense in her being proud of *that*. . . . Addison, among his females, who he compares to instruments of music, in *some* paper, is particularly severe, I well remember, upon the *Welsh harp*.

Steele undertook to pack an audience (for Addison's *Cato*).

"Charming Steel! how excellent was that man's heart! and how perfect was his friendship!"

[1] It was produced unsuccessfully in 1715.

The necessity of complying with times and of sparing persons is the great impediment of biography. . . . It is surely better that caprice, obstinacy, frolic, and folly, however they might delight in the description should be silently forgotten, than that, by wanton merriment and unseasonable detection, a pang should be given to a widow, a daughter, a brother, or a friend. As the process of these narratives is now bringing me among my contemporaries, I begin to feel myself 'walking upon ashes under which the fire is not extinguished,' and coming to the time of which it will be proper rather to say 'nothing that is false, than all that is true.'

"If no relation loved Addison, this is not applicable to *him* at least. I think Lyttelton's kinsfolk were offended by these Lives;[1] but the other poets had none to care how ill *they* were used. The public, however, battled it awhile for Gray, I think, and for Prior, and foolishly enough for Milton; who is *so* praised that his best lovers could not wish him more eloquent or lasting applause. Longinus could scarce have done it as well."

Addison died, leaving no child but a daughter.

"Who I have always heard hated her father's works, and despised his name, which, however, she did not change."

In the House of Commons he (Addison) could not speak, and therefore was useless to the defence of the Government.

"I have heard a story, true or false, concerning

[1] Mrs. Montagu elected herself Lyttelton's champion.

some member of Parliament, who having been galled by Addison's wit, revenged himself upon this sensibility of feeling, by crying out that a man who pretended to be *Guardian* of his country, must long be a *Spectator*, before he was qualified to be a *Tatler* in that House. I think a lover was brought in too, but I forget how."

Swift adds that if he (Addison) proposed himself for king, he would hardly have been refused.

"By what strange contradiction, then, could such a man be *despised by his wife*? Mr. Addison gives the palm of conjugal merit, I remember, to ladies who resemble the Bee. I know not whether he was naturalist enough to know that amongst *insects*, the *Hymen*optera include all little creatures that have *stings*."

If his jests are coarse, his arguments are strong. (Dennis's criticism of Addison's *Cato*.)

"But did neither friend nor enemy, neither Dennis, nor Pope, nor Dr. Johnson find that the temptation of Juba to forsake Cato by Syphax, in the early part of the play, is borrowed from *Alcibiades*, an exploded tragedy of Otway?[1] where Tisaphernes says, almost in old Syphax's words,

"'Curse on the boy, how steadily he hears me!'

It is indeed greatly improved by Addison."

At an age not exceeding twelve years he, [the Duke of Buckinghamshire] resolved to educate himself. (*Life of Sheffield.*)

[1] Otway's first play, 1675.

"He educated *himself*, so he had, in earnest, no education. His passions were never broken down by authority, nor his reason cultivated so as to receive mysterious truths. . . . A man who, like Sheffield, educates himself, will often possess powers of wit, and treasures of general knowledge; but he scarcely can be a scholar, or a Christian; he has never *learned* to be such; never gone thro' the necessary discipline."

In a gay French company he (Prior) produced these extempore lines:—

Mais cette voix, et ces beaux yeux,
Font Cupidon trop dangereux;
Et je suis triste quand je crie,
Bannissons la Melancholie.

"From your charming voice and eyes
Cupid's darts new mischief borrow;
And my bosom heaves with sighs
Whilst I sing, lets banish sorrow."

Solomon is the work to which he (Prior) entrusted the protection of his name.

"The variety with which Solomon courts his favourite Abra—the various devices I mean, were all literally and positively used by Louis Quatorze to seduce La Vallière, who, altho' enamour'd of her Sovereign, as Abra is represented to be, required all his skill and power before he could prevail."

He (Congreve) treated the Muses with ingratitude

. . . he wished to be considered rather as a man of fashion than of wit.

"It was not affectation, tho' he did treat the Muses with ingratitude; he lived with duchesses more willingly than with wits; he was, I believe, a truly *proud Salopian*, thinking much more of birth than of talents."[1]

From the whole mass of English poetry the most poetical paragraph.

"Garrick was always angry when Doctor Johnson said these lines[2] were better than any twelve descriptive lines in Shakespear."[3]

When he (Blackmore) first engaged in the study of physic, he inquired, as he says, of Dr. Sydenham, what authors he should read, and was directed by Sydenham to *Don Quixote*; 'which,' said he, 'is a very good book; I read it still.' (*Life of Blackmore.*)

"And this joke, silly as it was, seems to me not original. I have read it as recommended in the same scornful manner by some statesman. Oh, it was Lord Oxford, who being applied to, very seriously as it appeared, advised the youth who was his dependent (Mr. Rowe,[4] if I remember rightly) quickly to learn Spanish. And *this* accomplishment being attained, the unfeeling Premier, instead of employing him, as was not unreasonably expected, only said, 'Then, Sir,

[1] Congreve was born at Bardsey, near Leeds. He came of an old Staffordshire family.

[2] *The Mourning Bride*, II. 1.

[3] The dispute is recorded by Boswell, *sub anno* 1769.

[4] The story, taken from Spence, is given by Johnson in his *Life of Rowe.*

you will have[1] the pleasure of reading *Don Quixote* in the original.'"

He that believes his powers strong enough to force their own way, commonly tries only to please himself. (*Life of Gay.*)

"As Doctor Johnson said *he* did, till he was starved into civility; 'and now,' added he, 'I am eminently and attentively polite.'"[2]

Gay's *The Beggar's Opera.*

"The modes of the Court was given him by Lord Chesterfield; and the song of 'Gamesters and Lawyers' was the composition of Fortescue."[3]

Gay produced a second part under the name of *Polly.*

"I remember liking to read it (*Polly*, the second part of *The Beggar's Opera*) when I was a girl; but I thought no one else had ever read it till I had the pleasure of being acquainted with Mr. Mangin.[4] The copy which lay about my father's house was a *quarto.*"

As a poet he (Gay) cannot be rated high. He was, as I once heard a female critic remark, of a lower order.

"His wife, Mrs. Johnson."

It (Gay's *Trivia*) is sprightly, various and pleasant.

"It was written, I dare say, to amuse Pope and Swift; he knew their taste."

[1] For "you will have" Johnson's version has the neater "I envy you."

[2] "I think myself a very polite man." (*Boswell*, 1778.)

[3] William Fortescue, Master of the Rolls, 1741.

[4] See note p. 139.

He (Granville) was commended by old Waller, who perhaps was pleased to find himself imitated in six lines. (*Life of Granville.*)

"All the poets of those days did, inasmuch as their abilities permitted, certainly endeavour to copy *Dryden*. Of these imitators Pope was confessedly highest on the scale, and Gay lowest, but the style and manner were alike in all.

"Next to this school succeeded that of Mason, Gray, and Whitehead; of these poor Cumberland was last and lowest. Then came the Ossianists, and now Lord Byron, Scott, and Southey seek a new way to fame, in which all who put pen to paper follow implicitly with more or less good fortune. Meanwhile Doctor Goldsmith, and, I will add, Rogers in his *Pleasures of Memory*, took *their own way*, and few can follow them. Cowper did not try; he will be always an original thinker in these days, as Young was during Pope's reign."

The Princess of Modena,[1] whose charms appear to have gained a strong prevalence over his (Granville's) imagination. (*Life of Granville.*)

"She was very pretty, tho', and very elegant, and liked to exert her power over men, fancying, perhaps, she might make coquetry useful to political if not to pious purposes."

He is for ever amusing himself with puerilities of mythology; his King is Jupiter; who, if the Queen brings no children, has a barren Juno. The Queen is compounded of Juno, Venus, and Minerva. His

[1] Mary Beatrice of Modena married James II., 1673.

poem on the Duchess of Grafton's law-suit, after having rattled awhile with Juno and Pallas, Mars and Alcides, Cassiope, Niobe, and the Propetides, Hercules, Minos, and Rhadamanthus, at last concludes its folly with profaneness. (*Life of Granville.*)

"When the *Luctus et Gaudia* of the two Universities was printed in 1760, one man had clothed in the *Phœnician* language *his* poetical hopes and predictions of felicity. When forced by his brother wits and scholars to translate his ode, thus it was:—

'George the Second is dead; Jupiter and Juno mourn:
George the Third reigns; Jupiter and Juno rejoice.'"

Anne Countess of Macclesfield (reputed mother of Richard Savage). (*Life of Savage.*)

"How came this lady to be received in society so as to be able to injure him? We are less scrupulous *now* in the nineteenth century, yet I think such a character would boast few acquaintances, especially among the people in upper life."[1]

He (Savage) himself confessed that when he lived in great familiarity with Dennis,[2] he wrote an epigram[3] against him.

[1] It is now generally considered improbable that Savage was the son of the Countess. He never furnished any proofs, and it is likely that the child of the Countess's intrigue with Earl Rivers died in infancy.

[2] John Dennis (1657–1734), critic and playwright, Pope's redoubtable opponent.

[3] "Should Dennis publish you had stabbed your brother,
Lampooned your monarch, or debauched your mother;
Say, what revenge on Dennis can be had,
Too dull for laughter, for reply too mad?

"An anonymous friend bade me, in a letter, remember these lines and despise Baretti's lampoon.[1] *I did more:* I forgave it, and sent him money when he really wanted. Our friend Colonel Barry[2] one day, when Mr. Mangin[3] lived on the Queen's Parade, Bath, alluded to my character of Baretti, given in the newspaper then called *The World*."

With these ladies (Stella and Mrs. Dingley) he (Swift) passed his hours of relaxation . . . but never did he see either without a witness.

"Then he must have opened his bosom to *three* persons; or more still, if the witness was not always the same person, oddly contented with the character of a *sunk fence* between Swift and his ladies."

Pope was, through his whole life, ambitious of splendid acquaintance. (*Life of Pope.*)

"I knew a gentleman (little resembling Pope indeed), who used to delight himself in the close of life by celebrating his mother's virtues; but the panegyric commonly began, and always ended, in his repetition of her favourite maxim: 'Get,' said she, 'my boy, get *great acquaintances*!' *His* mother, like Pope's, was a poor feeble-minded thing, unworthy

> On one so poor you cannot take the law,
> On one so old your sword you scorn to draw.
> Uncaged then let the harmless monster rage,
> Secure in dulness, madness, wánt, and age."

[1] See pp. 31, 63.

[2] Col. Henry Barry (*d.* 1822), private secretary to Lord Rawdon during the American War.

[3] See p. 139.

any one's care or esteem. Perhaps they are the mothers most regarded."

Another of his (Pope's) early correspondents was Mr. Cromwell,[1] of whom I have heard nothing particular but that he used to ride a-hunting in a tye-wig.

"Wigs were at first tyed, on purpose that men should ride in them either o' hunting or in battle. The Duke of Marlbro' is represented by painters as winning all his battles in a tye-wig, . . . and it was, I think, called a campaign wig. 'Honest, hat-less Cromwell in red briches,' Gay says."

I followed his (Garth's) advice; waited on Lord Halifax some time after; said I hoped he would find his objections to these passages removed; read them to him *exactly* as they were at first; and his lordship was extremely pleased with them, and cried out, 'Ay, now they are perfectly right; nothing can be better.' (*Life of Pope.*)

"The French *Recueils* tell a similar tale of some sculptor and some cardinal, I forget who, that play'd the silly part of Halifax. The artist took home his work, having never touched it after the great man had shown his taste by his objections. . . . 'And *now*, my lord' (says he), 'how do you find the statue?' 'Trovo!' replied the gull'd ecclesiastic, 'che veramente gli avete data la vita.'"

Being under the necessity of making a subter-

[1] Henry Cromwell, Pope's correspondent, was a minor critic and versifier.

DAVID GARRICK

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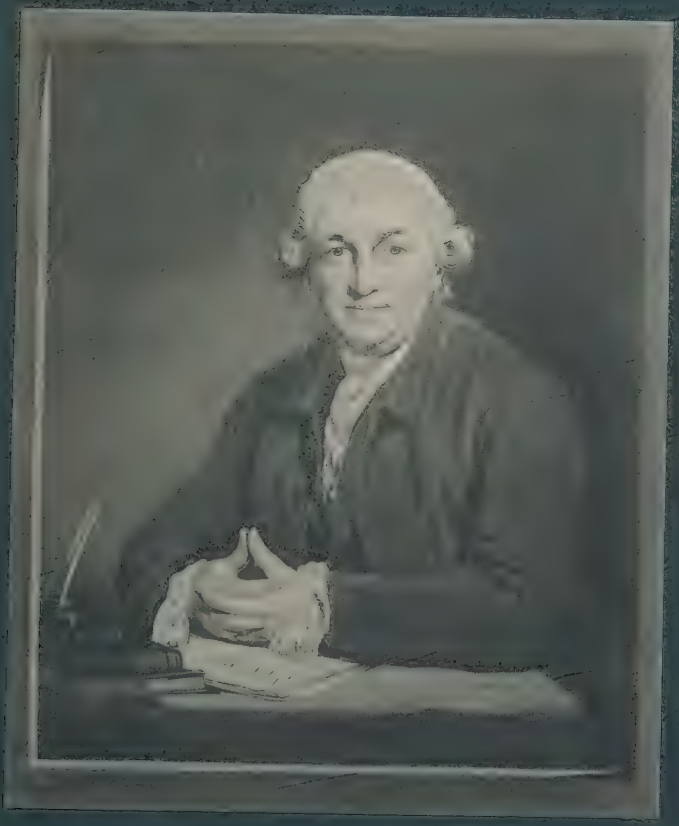
SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS



raneous passage to a garden on the other side of the road, he (Pope) adorned it with fossil bodies, and dignified it with the title of a grotto.

"And he added the famous quibble of 'What we cannot *overcome* we must *undergo*.'"

Mankind expect from elevated genius a uniformity of greatness, and watch its degradation with malicious wonder. (*Life of Pope.*)

"I went many years ago with friends to see *le chien sçavant*, who, when he play'd his trick prettily, his master encouraged by giving him bits of something out of his pocket. 'Qu'est ce donc, Monsieur?' (says one of the company). 'Du Paté, Mademoiselle,' replies the fellow. '*Il mange pourtant comme uno autre chien*,' exclaims another of our party. The people do just so by a great author, Pope or Johnson."

Pope in his edition (of Shakespeare) undoubtedly did many things wrong, and left many things undone; but let him not be defrauded of his due praise.

"When Johnson had finished his preface to Shakespear, Mr. Thrale said, 'Oh, Sir, you have driven Pope quite into shade.' 'I fear *not*, Sir,' was our Doctor's reply; 'the little fellow has done wonders!'"

At their last interview in the Tower, Atterbury presented Pope with a Bible.

"And there is a black story told of and thro' Lord Chesterfield concerning that present; but I think it

loses ground *now*, 1817. It was once in every mouth and every publication." [1]

Pope appears to have contemplated his victory over the Dunces with great exultation.

"Ralph [2] (one of the heroes of the *Dunciad*) outlived all, and was lodging near Garrick's house at Hampton, where he visited familiarly, but perhaps in somewhat of the style of a dependant; till one day Mr. Garrick was engaged in shewing his pleasure-grounds to a friend or two that he had detained to dine with him; and being perhaps thoughtless, or possibly unwilling to quit his company, he contented himself with calling the head-gardener,—'And, d'ye hear,' said he, 'take a card, and go yourself directly and beg Mr. Ralph's company to dinner. Take a card, I say, and make haste.' The man left us, and I suppose we all forgot what had passed till somebody inquired at dinner where Mr. Ralph was. 'Lord, Sir! Mr. Ralph is very ill, very ill indeed.' The gardener took a *cart* to fetch him, and he flung himself in such a passion, Dick thought he would have died. . . . How Garrick smoothed him up again I know not, but he came to Hampton as usual after *that*."

James Worsdale . . . declared that he was the

[1] Atterbury said to Pope, "If ever you learn that I have any dealings with the Pretender, I give you leave to say that my punishment is just." The Bible is said to have passed into the possession of Ralph Allen (Fielding's Squire Allworthy) of Prior Park.

[2] James Ralph (1705–1762), miscellaneous writer, author of a memoir of Pope.

messenger who carried by Pope's direction the books to Curll.[1] (*Life of Pope.*)

"He was a sad fellow, but very comical as a buffoon. He was the original Lady Pentweazle, and was employed as pimp and parasite, and everything, by Thrale and Murphy in their merry hours. His taking off the old Duchess of Marlborough, Sarah Jennings, was particularly humourous."

Our language had few letters except those of statesmen. (*Life of Pope.*)

"Mr. Rowe's [Letters] are read by women very much."

Many read it (*The Essay on Man*) for a manual of piety.

"As my brother-in-law, Alderman Plumbe, who married Mr. Thrale's sister, read Shaftesbury's *Characteristics* on a Sunday, 'it is' (says he) 'all about virtue so,—all *uncommanded* virtue . . .' and the librarian of Brera placed Tillotson and Shaftesbury together, I remember; for, tho' he was himself an infidel, he had the bitterness and bigotry of the religion he *profess'd*."

It is known that Bolingbroke concealed from Pope his real opinions. He once discovered them to Mr. Hooke.

"*This* Johnson learn'd of Abbé Hook[2] when we were in France together; yet I have my doubts.

[1] Pope instigated the publication of his *Letters* for which he pretended to blame Curll.

[2] Dr. Luke Joseph Hooke (1716–1796), visited in Paris by Johnson in 1775.

The Papists are all eager to save *their poet* from imputation of infidelity, and Johnson was very willing to see so great a poet saved."

Mr. Allen gave him (Warburton) his niece and his estate.[1] (*Life of Pope.*)

"The estate is all gone now, I believe. Warburton left no children, and his widow married Mr. Stafford Smyth, who since her death married some mean woman and sold Prior Park."

Walpole treated him (Pope) with so much consideration as, at his request, to solicit and obtain from the French minister an abbey for Mr. Southcot, whom he considered himself as obliged to reward . . . for the benefit which he had received from his attendance in a long illness.

"From whom descends either lineally, as a natural child, or collaterally, the now famous prophetess, Johanna Southcote.[2] The taste of a *Ferme ornée* descends likewise from Mr. Southcote. *He* was the first to enclose a field with a twisted walk and shrubbery ornamented with beautiful flowers. Mr. Southcote was Lady Vane's favourite S. mentioned in *Peregrine Pickle.*"

Telling his readers in a note that the work was imperfect, because part of his subject was *vice too high* to be yet exposed. (*Life of Pope.*)

[1] Pope introduced Warburton to Ralph Allen. Johnson proceeds to suggest that the Allen fortune paved the way to the bishopric.

[2] Joanna Southcote, a domestic servant, claimed supernatural powers. After a brief notoriety she died insane in 1814.

HORACE WALPOLE

After painting by
SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS

"And I recollect but very little *vice* in it (the *Characters of Women*) though much caprice. But perhaps I still retain my old and odd curiosity; for when I saw Quin act Sir John Brute,[1] and heard him call for a song that should be full (said he) of sin and impiety, I felt disappointed when the players sung a 'Bumper, Squire Jones,' in which I could discover no sin or impiety at all."

Pope expressed undoubting confidence of a future state. Being asked by his friend Mr. Hooke, a papist,[2] whether he would not die like his father and mother, and whether a priest should not be called: he answered, 'I do not think it is essential, but it will be very right, and I thank you for putting me in mind of it.'

"Malherbe was, like him (Pope), unwilling to call the priest; he was contented to receive him when he came . . . 'for,' said he, 'other people do send for a confessor; and I suppose God Almighty won't make a Paradise on purpose for poor Malherbe; so you may shew Monsieur L'Abbé in, if you please.'"

He (Pope) may be said to have resembled Dryden, as being not one that was distinguished by vivacity in company.

"Costar, the French wit, says of such a character, that the pleasantest moments he ever passed were not with men of the most fertile minds; and that the pleasantest walks he ever took were not in those countries which most excel in fruitfulness."

[1] In Vanbrugh's *The Provoked Wife*, 1697.

[2] See note, p. 155.

Pope's revenue amounted only to about 800*l.* a year.

"A very good income in the year 1730, quite equal to 1500*l.* o' year now, in 1802, and less than *that* would enable a man to give his friends more than a pint of wine,[1] surely, altho' it is not to be had this day for less than four shillings and sixpence the bottle."

It would be hard to find a man so well entitled (as Pope) to notice by his wit, that ever delighted so much in talking of his money.

"A man, never; a woman, yes,—it was Mrs. Montagu."

In the letters both of Swift and Pope there appears such narrowness of mind, as makes them insensible of any excellence that has not some affinity with their own.

"An odd contempt for every study but that of poetry and metaphysics does certainly seem to run through all their (Swift's and Pope's) notions. Natural history is their perpetual scorn. . . . I guess not why. *To wander thro' a wilderness of moss* has at least this claim to preference, that something *certain* may be learned, however trifling. . . . Those who confound their readers with talking about time, and space, and matter, and motion, identity and infinity, spend time, and breath, and paper all in vain. They neither teach nor learn."

[1] "When he had two guests in his house, he would set at supper a single pint upon the table; and, having himself taken two small glasses, would retire and say, 'Gentlemen, I leave you to your wine.'" (Johnson's *Life of Pope.*)

He (Pope) professed to have learned his poetry from Dryden, whom, whenever an opportunity was presented, he praised through his whole life with unvaried liberality; and perhaps his character may receive some illustration if he be compared with his master.

"This parallel (the famous one between Pope and Dryden) is imitated from the famous French one[1] between Corneille and Racine; and that from an old classical comparison between the merits of Thucydides and Herodotus . . . *Oh imitatores! Servum pecus.*"

I cannot forbear to observe that the comparison of a student's progress in the sciences with the journey of a traveller in the Alps,[2] is perhaps the best that English poetry can shew.

"*Perhaps* so it is. But they say *now* that the original thought came from Silius Italicus, book 3rd,[3] and Drummond certainly recollected *that* when he wrote these lines:

> 'And as a pilgrim who the Alps doth pass,
> Or Atlas' temple crown'd with Winter's glass,
> When he some heapes of hills hath overwent
> Beginnes to think on rest, his journey spent,
> Now mounting some tall mountain, he dothe find
> More heights before him than he left behind.'"

The meanest passage is the satire upon Sporus:[4]

"Certainly not; but Dr. Johnson loved a Hervey."[5]

[1] Boileau's *Satires*. [2] Pope's *Essay on Criticism*, l. 225.
[3] *Bellum Punicum*, iii. 529.
[4] Pope's *Epistle to Arbuthnot*, 305 *et seq.*
[5] The original of Sporus was John Hervey, Baron Hervey of Ickworth (1696–1743), author of *Memoirs of Reign of George II.* His brothers, Henry and Thomas, were intimate friends of Johnson.

God said let Newton be! and all was light![1]

"There is something like this said of Aristotle, but I forget by whom: 'Now Nature lay in obscurity till *he* appeared, etc.'; but it was really little less than profane in Mr. Pope to put his imitation, thus heightened by words so awful, on a Christian's sepulchre, and in a Christian church."

Savage, who lived much with Thomson, once told me he heard a lady remarking that she could gather from his works three parts of his character, that he was a great lover, a great swimmer, and rigorously abstinent; but, said Savage, he knows not any love but that of the sex; he was perhaps never in cold water in his life; and he indulges himself in all the luxury that comes within his reach. (*Life of Thomson.*)

"The lady was no good judge, I suppose. A Capt[n]. Ker told me a strange thing of him once, and I feel since that it was true somehow. At a friend's house in Scotland where Thomson was visiting, came on a visit likewise a young lady with whom the poet fancied himself much in love; and having an idea (says Captain Ker) that it would be a heavenly sight to see her strip for bed, he bor'd a hole thro' his own floor who lay over her chamber, and meant to peep successfully in at the crevice; but having drunk hard and the girl not going to rest as soon as he expected, he dropt asleep and snor'd so loud she heard him; and climbing on the chairs, set her candle to the place, and burn'd his nose and cur'd him of his passion."

[1] Epitaph for Newton's monument in the Abbey:—

Nature and Nature's laws lay hid in night:
God said, "Let Newton be"! And all was light.

The thought of the Last Day makes every man more than poetical.

"It makes some people less than poetical. I went once with a lady to see some fireworks, when an animated harlequin ran up a pole, lighting a ring of lamps at top. 'This,' says my companion, 'is truly *awful*, and puts me in mind of the *Last Day!*'"

His (Mallet's) first tragedy was *Eurydice*, acted at Drury Lane in 1731; of which I know not the reception nor the merit, but have heard it mentioned as a mean performance.

"I remember seeing Mrs. Cibber[1] once play Eurydice for her benefit; or was it Elvira?[2] but my father said Mallet wrote the play. He visited Mallet, and told us once how Mrs. Mallet kiss'd her husband's hand, and said, 'I kiss the dear hand that confers immortality.' My mother thought it very ridiculous, I remember."

He was employed to turn the public vengeance upon Byng, and wrote a letter of accusation under the character of a 'Plain Man.' (*Life of Mallet.*)

"I recollect my family joining in Mallet's opinion, that Byng was a sad fellow; and they called an old Mrs. Osborne, who put her house in mourning for the Admiral, Mother Damnable: she hung her rooms with black."[3]

[1] Susannah Cibber, wife of Theophilus, son of Colley Cibber. She became a famous tragedian and a member of Garrick's company.

[2] In Colley Cibber's *Love Makes a Man.* [3] Cf. p. 96.

In his retirement he (Gray) wrote an ode on the 'Death of Mr. Walpole's Cat.'

"She is also called a Tabby Cat in one line, a Tortoise-Shell Cat in another; perhaps he knew no more of *his* nymph than Cowley of his fictitious mistresses. A poet makes his puss to his own mind, and then writes verses to her." [1]

Johnson's *Life of Lyttelton.*

"Doctor Johnson requested Lord Westcote,[2] in my hearing, to write this life for him (tho' I am sure he neither loved nor esteemed the man). Lord Westcote declined the work with many complimentary expressions; said his dear brother was in the best posssible hands, etc.; and after it was written, flew in a rage and ran to Mrs. Montagu, complaining of Doctor Johnson, who sate still and laugh'd at my Lord Parenthesis, as he called Billy Lyttelton."

He (Lyttelton) was content to seek happiness again by a second marriage with the daughter of Sir Robert Rich; but the experiment was unsuccessful.

"Very modestly said. Johnson would not suffer his personal dislike to operate upon character in a work he meant to be lasting. Lady Lyttelton lived to a very great age."

[1] "Demurest of the tabby kind . . .
Her coat that with the tortoise vies."

Cowley's *The Chronicle* enumerates his fictitious mistresses from Margarita to "Heleonora first of the name, whom God grant long to reign."

[2] William Henry Lyttelton, created Baron Westcote of Balamare, co. Longford, 1776. He was a brother of George Lyttelton, the writer, created Baron Lyttelton in 1756. Cf. p. 144.

Doctor,[1] you shall be my confessor.

"So ended a man (Lord Lyttelton) who had always fulminated against auricular confession, tho' it is surely better confessing our sins to a priest than a physician. What signifies blaming each other so? Confession to a priest has nothing in it *necessarily* evil; Romanists may have abused the practice, but blaming our brother Christians is no better in us Protestants: 'twere wiser to let *that* alone."

[1] Lyttelton's physician, whose account of his death is quoted by Johnson.

EXTRACTS FROM *THRALIANA*

Mr. Thrale's Education

He (the elder Thrale) educated his son and three daughters quite in a high style. His son he wisely connected with the Cobhams [1] and their relations, Grenville's, Lytteltons, and Pitts, to whom he lent money, and they lent assistance of every other kind, so that my Mr. Thrale was bred up at Stowe and Stoke and Oxford, and every genteel place; had been abroad with Lord Westcote, whose expenses old Thrale cheerfully paid, I suppose, who was thus a kind of tutor to the young man, who had not failed to profit by these advantages, and who was, when he came down to Offley to see his father's birthplace, a very handsome and well accomplished gentleman.

Character of Mr. Thrale

As this is *Thraliana*, I will now write Mr. *Thrale's* character in it. It is not because I am in good or ill-humour with him or he with me, for we are not capricious people, but have, I believe, the same opinion of each other at all places and times.

Mr. Thrale's person is manly, his countenance agree-

[1] See p. 119.

able, his eyes steady and of the deepest blue; his look neither soft nor severe, neither sprightly nor gloomy, but thoughtful and intelligent; his address is neither caressive nor repulsive, but unaffectedly civil and decorous; and his manner more completely free from every kind of trick or particularity than I ever saw any person's.[1] He is a man wholly, as I think, out of the power of mimicry. He loves money, and is diligent to obtain it; but he loves liberality too, and is willing enough both to give generously and to spend fashionably. His passions either are not strong, or else he keeps them under such command that they seldom disturb his tranquillity or his friends; and it must, I think, be something more than common which can affect him strongly, either with hope, fear, anger, love, or joy. His regard for his father's memory is remarkably great, and he has been a most exemplary brother; though, when the house of his favourite sister was on fire, and we were all alarmed with the account of it in the night, I well remember that he never rose, but bidding the servant who called us to go to her assistance, quietly turned about and slept to his usual hour. I must give another trait of his tranquillity on a different occasion. He had built great casks holding 1000 hogsheads each, and was much pleased with their profit and appearance. One day, however, he came down to Streatham as usual to dinner, and after hearing and talking of a hundred trifles, "but I forgot," says he, "to tell you how one of my great casks is burst, and all the beer run out."

Mr. Thrale's sobriety, and the decency of his con-

[1] Cf. p. 141.

versation, being wholly free from all oaths, ribaldry and profaneness, make him a man exceedingly comfortable to live with; while the easiness of his temper and slowness to take offence add greatly to his value as a domestic man. Yet I think his servants do not much love him, and I am not sure that his children have much affection for him; low people almost all indeed agree to abhor him, as he has none of that officious and cordial manner which is universally required by them, nor any skill to dissemble his dislike of their coarseness. With regard to his wife, though little tender of her person, he is very partial to her understanding; but he is obliging to nobody, and confers a favour less pleasing than many a man refuses to confer one. This appears to me to be as just a character as can be given of the man with whom I have now lived thirteen years; and though he is extremely reserved and uncommunicative, yet one must know something of him after so long acquaintance. Johnson has a very great degree of kindness and esteem for him, and says if he would talk more, his manner would be very completely that of a perfect gentleman.

. . . . . .

People have a strange propensity to making vows on trifling occasions, a trick one would not think of, but I once caught my husband at it, and have since then been suspicious that 'tis oftener done than believed. For example: Mr. Thrale and I were driving through E. Grinsted, and found the inn we used to put up at destroyed by fire. He expressed great uneasiness, and I still kept crying, "Why can we not go to the other inn? 'tis a very good house; here is no

difficulty in the case." All this while Mr. Thrale grew violently impatient, endeavoured to bribe the post-boy to go on to the next post-town, etc., but in vain; till, pressed by inquiries and solicitations he could no longer elude, he confessed to me that he had sworn an oath or made a vow, I forget which, seventeen years before, never to set his foot within those doors again, having had some fraud practised on him by a landlord who then kept the house, but had been dead long enough ago. When I heard this all was well; I desired him to sit in the chaise while the horses were changed, and walked into the house myself to get some refreshment the while.

. . . . . .

[In 1779, June, after his recovery from the first fit of paralysis, she writes:]

His head is as clear as ever; his spirits indeed are low, but they will mend; few people live in such a state of preparation for eternity, I think, as my dear master has done since I have been connected with him; regular in his public and private devotions, constant at the Sacrament, temperate in his appetites, moderate in his passions,—he has less to apprehend from a sudden summons than any man I have known who was young and gay, and high in health and fortune like him.

First Meeting with Johnson

It was on the second Thursday of the month of January, 1765, that I first saw Mr. Johnson in a room. Murphy, whose intimacy with Mr. Thrale had been of

many years' standing, was one day dining with us at our house in Southwark, and was zealous that we should be acquainted with Johnson, of whose moral and literary character he spoke in the most exalted terms; and so whetted our desire of seeing him soon that we were only disputing *how* he should be invited, *when* he should be invited, and what should be the pretence. At last it was resolved that one Woodhouse,[1] a shoemaker, who had written some verses, and been asked to some tables, should likewise be asked to ours, and made a temptation to Mr. Johnson to meet him; accordingly he came, and Mr. Murphy at four o'clock brought Mr. Johnson to dinner. We liked each other so well that the next Thursday was appointed for the same company to meet, exclusive of the shoemaker, and since then Johnson has remained till this day our constant acquaintance, visitor, companion, and friend.

A Noble Ambition

Mr. Thrale overbrewed himself last winter and made an artificial scarcity of money in the family which has extremely lowered his spirits. Mr. Johnson endeavoured last night, and so did I, to make him promise that he would never more brew a larger quantity of beer in one winter than 80,000 barrels, but my Master, mad with the noble ambition of emulating

[1] James Woodhouse (1735–1820), the poetical shoemaker discovered (among her own retainers) by Mrs. Montagu. Johnson derided the notice taken of him, and called it "all vanity and childishness."

GIUSEPPE BARETTI

After painting by
SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS

Whitbread and Calvert, two fellows that he despises, —could scarcely be prevailed on to promise even *this*, that he will not brew more than four score thousand barrels a year for five years to come. He did promise that much, however; and so Johnson bade me write it down in the *Thraliana*; — and so the wings of Speculation are clipped a little—very fain would I have pinioned her, but I had not strength to perform the operation.

How to Attract Rooks

Lady Lade [Mr. Thrale's sister] consulted him [Johnson] about her son, Sir John. "Endeavour, Madam," said he, "to procure him knowledge; for really ignorance to a rich man is like fat to a sick sheep, it only serves to call the rooks about him."

A Fellow-countryman of Brutus

Will Burke[1] was tart upon Mr. Baretti for being too dogmatical in his talk about politics. "You have," says he, "no business to be investigating the characters of Lord Falkland or Mr. Hampden. You cannot judge of their merits, they are no countrymen of yours." "True," replied Baretti, "and you should learn by the same rule to speak very cautiously about Brutus and Mark Antony; they are my countrymen, and I must have their characters tenderly treated by foreigners."

[1] A relation of Edmund Burke, Under Secretary of State; formerly identified with "Junius."

Baretti

Baretti [1] could not endure to be called, or scarcely thought, a foreigner, and indeed it did not often occur to his company that he was one; for his accent was wonderfully proper, and his language always copious, always nervous, always full of various allusions, flowing too with a rapidity worthy of admiration, and far beyond the power of nineteen in twenty natives. He had also a knowledge of the solemn language and the gay, could be sublime with Johnson, or blackguard with the groom; could dispute, could rally, could quibble, in our language. Baretti has, besides, some skill in music, with a bass voice, very agreeable, besides a falsetto which he can manage so as to mimic any singer he hears. I would also trust his knowledge of painting a long way. These accomplishments, with his extensive power over every modern language, make him a most pleasing companion while he is in good humour; and his lofty consciousness of his own superiority, which made him tenacious of every position, and drew him into a thousand distresses, did not, I must own, ever disgust me, till he began to exercise it against myself, and resolve to reign in our house by fairly defying the mistress of it. Pride, however, though shocking enough, is never despicable, but vanity, which he possessed too, in an eminent degree, will sometimes make a man near sixty ridiculous.

France displayed all Mr. Baretti's useful powers—he bustled for us, he catered for us, he took care of the child, he secured an apartment for the maid, he pro-

[1] See pp. 31, 63.

vided for our safety, our amusement, our repose; without him the pleasure of that journey would never have balanced the pain. And great was his disgust, to be sure, when he caught us, as he often did, ridiculing French manners, French sentiments, etc. I think he half cryed to Mrs. Payne, the landlady at Dover, on our return, because we laughed at French cookery, and French accommodations. Oh, how he would court the maids at the inns abroad, abuse the men perhaps! and that with a facility not to be exceeded, as they all confessed, by any of the natives. But so he could in Spain, I find, and so 'tis plain he could here. I will give one instance of his skill in our low street language. Walking in a field near Chelsea, he met a fellow, who, suspecting him from dress and manner to be a foreigner, said sneeringly, "Come, Sir, will you show me the way to France?" "No, Sir," says Baretti, instantly, "but I will show you the way to Tyburn." Such, however, was his ignorance in a certain line, that he once asked Johnson for information who it was composed the Pater Noster, and I heard him tell Evans[1] the story of Dives and Lazarus as the subject of a poem he once had composed in the Milanese dialect, expecting great credit for his powers of invention. Evans owned to me that he thought the man drunk, whereas poor Baretti was, both in eating and drinking, a model of temperance. Had he guessed Evans's thoughts, the parson's gown would scarcely have saved him a knouting from the ferocious Italian.

[1] Evans was a clergyman and rector of Southwark (Hayward.)

Baretti's ready Wit

When Johnson and Burke went to see Baretti in Newgate, they had small comfort to give him, and bid him not hope too strongly. "Why what can *he* fear," says Baretti, placing himself between 'em, "that holds two such hands as I do?"

An Italian came one day to Baretti, when he was in Newgate for murder, to desire a letter of recommendation for the teaching of his scholars, when he (Baretti) should be hanged. "You rascal," replies Baretti, in a rage, "if I were not *in my own apartment*, I would kick you downstairs directly."

Baretti at Streatham

Baretti had a comical aversion to Mrs. Macaulay,[1] and his aversions are numerous and strong. If I had not once written his character in verse,[2] I would now write it in prose, for few people know him better: he was—*Dieu me pardonne*, as the French say—my inmate for very near three years; and though I really liked the man once for his talents, and at last was weary of him for the use he made of them, I never altered my sentiments concerning him; for his character is easily

[1] Catherine Macaulay (1731–1791), author of a *History of England* from James I. to Anne. Her second husband was a brother of the notorious quack doctor, James Graham, who founded "The Temple of Health."

[2] In "The Streatham Portraits." See Appendix.

seen, and his soul above disguise, haughty and insolent, and breathing defiance against all mankind; while his powers of mind exceed most people's, and his powers of purse are so slight that they leave him dependent on all. Baretti is for ever in the state of a stream dammed up: if he could once get loose, he would bear down all before him.

Every soul that visited at our house while he was master of it, went away abhorring it; and Mrs. Montagu, grieved to see my meekness so imposed upon, had thoughts of writing me on the subject an anonymous letter, advising me to break with him. Seward,[1] who tried at last to reconcile us, confessed his wonder that we had lived together so long. Johnson used to oppose and battle him, but never with his own consent: the moment he was cool, he would always condemn himself for exerting his superiority over a man who was his friend, a foreigner, and poor: yet I have been told by Mrs. Montagu that he attributed his loss of our family to Johnson: ungrateful and ridiculous! if it had not been for his mediation, I would not so long have borne trampling on, as I did for the last two years of our acquaintance.

Not a servant, not a child, did he leave me any authority over; if I would attempt to correct or dismiss them, there was instant appeal to Mr. Baretti, who was sure always to be against me in every dispute. With Mr. Thrale I was ever cautious of contending, conscious that a misunderstanding there could never answer, as I have no friend or relation in the world to protect me from the rough treatment of a husband, should he

[1] See p. 68.

chuse to exert his prerogatives; but when I saw Baretti openly urging Mr. Thrale to cut down some little fruit trees my mother had planted and I had begged might stand, I confess I did take an aversion to the creature, and secretly resolved his stay should not be prolonged by my entreaties whenever his greatness chose to take huff and be gone. As to my eldest daughter, his behaviour was most ungenerous; he was perpetually spurring her to independence, telling her she had more sense and would have a better fortune than her mother, whose admonitions she ought therefore to despise; that she ought to write and receive her own letters *now*, and not submit to an authority I could not keep up if she once had the spirit to challenge it; that, if I died in a lying-in which happened while he lived here, he hoped Mr. Thrale would marry Miss Whitbred,[1] who would be a pretty companion for Hester, and not tyrannical and overbearing like me. Was I not fortunate to see myself once quit of a man like this? who thought his dignity was concerned to set me at defiance, and who was incessantly telling lies to my prejudice in the ears of my husband and children? When he walked out of the house on the 6th day of July, 1776, I wrote down what follows in my table book.

6 *July*, 1776.—This day is made remarkable by the departure of Mr. Baretti, who has, since October, 1773, been our almost constant inmate, companion, and, I vainly hoped, our friend. On the 11th of November, 1773, Mr. Thrale let him have 50*l.* and at our return from France 50*l.* more, besides his clothes and pocket money: in return to all this, he instructed our eldest

[1] Daughter of the brewer, Samuel Whitbread.

daughter—or thought he did—and puffed her about the town for a wit, a genius, a linguist, etc. At the beginning of the year 1776, we purposed visiting Italy under his conduct, but were prevented by an unforeseen and heavy calamity:[1] that Baretti, however, might not be disappointed of money as well as of pleasure, Mr. Thrale presented him with 100 guineas, which at first calmed his wrath a little, but did not, perhaps, make amends for his vexation; this I am the more willing to believe, as Dr. Johnson not being angry too, seemed to grieve him no little, after all our preparations made.

Now Johnson's virtue was engaged; and he, I doubt not, made it a point of conscience not to increase the distresses of a family already oppressed with affliction. Baretti, however, from this time grew sullen and captious; he went on as usual notwithstanding, making Streatham his home, carrying on business there, when he thought he had any to do, and teaching his pupil at by-times when he chose so to employ himself; for he always took his choice of hours, and would often spitefully fix on such as were particularly disagreeable to me, whom he has now not liked a long while, if ever he did. He professed, however, a violent attachment to our eldest daughter; said if *she* had died instead of her poor brother, he should have destroyed himself, with many as wild expressions of fondness. Within these few days, when my back was turned, he would often be telling her that he would go away and stay a month, with other threats of the same nature; and she, not being of a caressing or

[1] The death of their son.

obliging disposition, never, I suppose, soothed his anger or requested his stay.

Of all this, however, I can know nothing but from *her*, who is very reserved, and whose kindness I cannot so confide in as to be sure she would tell me all that passed between them ; and her attachment is probably greater to him than me, whom he has always endeavoured to lessen as much as possible, both in her eyes and—what was worse—her father's, by telling him how my parts had been over-praised by Johnson, and over-rated by the world ; that my daughter's skill in languages, even at the age of fourteen, would vastly exceed mine, and such other idle stuff; which Mr. Thrale had very little care about, but which Hetty doubtless thought of great importance. Be this as it may, no angry words ever passed between him and me, except perhaps now and then a little spar or so when company was by, in the way of raillery merely.

Yesterday, when Sir Joshua and Fitzmaurice dined here, I addressed myself to him with great particularity of attention, begging his company for Saturday, as I expected ladies, and said he must come and flirt with them, etc. My daughter in the meantime kept on telling me that Mr. Baretti was grown very old and very cross, would not look at her exercises, but said he would leave this house soon, for it was no better than Pandæmonium. Accordingly, the next day he packed up his cloke-bag, which he had not done for three years, and sent it to town ; and while we were wondering what he would say about it at breakfast, he was walking to London himself, without taking leave of any one person, except it may be the girl,

who owns they had much talk, in the course of which he expressed great aversion to me and even to her, who, he said, he once thought well of.

Now whether she had ever told the man things that I might have said of him in his absence, by way of provoking him to go, and so rid herself of his tuition; whether he was puffed up with the last 100 guineas and longed to be spending it *all' Italiano*; whether he thought Mr. Thrale would call him back, and he should be better established here than ever; or whether he really was idiot enough to be angry at my threatening to whip Susan and Sophy for going out of bounds, although *he* had given them leave, for Hetty said that was the first offence he took huff at, I never now shall know, for he never expressed himself as an offended man to me, except one day when he was not shaved at the proper hour forsooth, and then I would not quarrel with him, because nobody was by, and I knew him be so vile a lyar that I durst not trust his tongue with a dispute. He is gone, however, loaded with little presents from me, and with a large share too of my good opinion, though I most sincerely rejoice in his departure, and hope we shall never meet more but by chance.

Since our quarrel I had occasion to talk of him with Tom Davies,[1] who spoke with horror of his ferocious temper; "and yet," says I, "there is great sensibility about Baretti: I have seen tears often stand in his eyes." "Indeed," replies Davies, "I should like to have seen that sight vastly, when—even butchers weep."

[1] The actor and bookseller who introduced Boswell to Johnson.

Sophy Streatfield

I have since heard that Dr. Collier picked up a more useful friend, a Mrs. Streatfield, a widow, high in fortune and rather eminent both for the beauties of person and mind; her children, I find, he has been educating; and her eldest daughter is just now coming out into the world with a great character for elegance and literature.—20 *November*, 1776.

19 *May*, 1778.—The person who wrote the title of this book at the top of the page, on the other side—left hand—in the black letter, was the identical Miss Sophia Streatfield,[1] mentioned in *Thraliana*, as pupil to poor dear Doctor Collier, after he and I had parted. By the chance meeting of some of the currents which keep this ocean of human life from stagnating, this lady and myself were driven together nine months ago at Brighthelmstone: we soon grew intimate from having often heard of each other, and I have now the honour and happiness of calling her my friend. Her face is eminently pretty; her carriage elegant; her heart affectionate, and her mind cultivated. There is above all this an attractive sweetness in her manner, which claims and promises to repay one's confidence, and which drew from me the secret of my keeping a *Thraliana*, etc. etc. etc.

Jan, 1779.—Mr. Thrale is fallen in love, really and seriously, with Sophy Streatfield; but there is no wonder in that; she is very pretty, very gentle, soft, and insinuating; hangs about him, dances round him, cries when she parts from him, squeezes his hand

[1] See pp. 32, 39.

slyly, and with her sweet eyes full of tears looks so fondly in his face—and all for love of me as she pretends; that I can hardly, sometimes, help laughing in her face. A man must not be a *man* but an *it*, to resist such artillery. Marriott[1] said very well,

> "Man flatt'ring man not always can prevail,
> But woman flatt'ring man can never fail."

Murphy did not use, I think, to have a good opinion of me, but he seems to have changed his mind this Christmas, and to believe better of me. I am glad on't to be sure: the suffrage of such a man is well worth having: he sees Thrale's love of the fair S. S. I suppose: approves my silent and patient endurance of what I could not prevent by more rough and sincere behaviour.

20 *January*, 1780.—Sophy Streatfield is come to town: she is in the *Morning Post* too, I see (to be in the *Morning Post* is no good thing). She has won Wedderburne's[2] heart from his wife, I believe, and few married women will bear *that* patiently if I do; they will some of them wound her reputation, so that I question whether it can recover. Lady Erskine[3] made many odd inquiries about her to me yesterday, and winked and looked wise at her sister. The dear S. S. must be a little on her guard; nothing is so spiteful as a woman robbed of a heart she thinks she has a claim upon. She will not lose *that* with

[1] Sir James Marriott, a judge of the Admiralty Court.

[2] Lord Loughborough, later Earl of Rosslyn, Lord Chancellor 1793–1801.

[3] Wife of Sir James St. Clair Erskine, the nephew and heir of Lord Rosslyn.

temper, which she has taken perhaps no pains at all to preserve: and I do not observe with any pleasure, I fear, that my husband prefers Miss Streatfield to me, though I must acknowledge her younger, handsomer, and a better scholar. Of her chastity, however, I never had a doubt: she was bred by Dr. Collier in the strictest principles of piety and virtue; she not only knows she will be always chaste, but she knows why she will be so. Mr. Thrale is now by dint of disease quite out of the question, so I am a disinterested spectator; but her coquetry is very dangerous indeed, and I wish she were married that there might be an end on't. Mr. Thrale loves her, however, sick or well, better by a thousand degrees than he does me or any one else, and even now desires nothing on earth half so much as the sight of his Sophia.

> "E'en from the tomb the voice of nature cries!
> E'en in our ashes live their wonted fires!"

The Saturday before Mr. Thrale was taken ill, Saturday, 19th February—he was struck Monday, 21st February—we had a large party to tea, cards, and supper; Miss Streatfield was one, and as Mr. Thrale sate by her, he pressed her hand to his heart (as she told me herself), and said, "Sophy, we shall not enjoy this long, and to-night I will not be cheated of my only comfort." Poor soul! how shockingly tender! On the first Fryday that he spoke after his stupor, she came to see him, and as she sate by the bedside pitying him, "Oh," says he, "who would not suffer even all that I have endured to be pitied by you!" This I heard myself.

Here is Sophy Streatfield again, handsomer than ever, and flushed with new conquests; the Bishop of Chester[1] feels her power, I am sure; she showed me a letter from him that was as tender and had all the tokens upon it as strong as ever I remember to have seen 'em; I repeated to her out of Pope's Homer—"Very well, Sophy," says I:

> "'Range undisturb'd among the hostile crew,
> But touch not Hinchliffe,[2] Hinchliffe is my due.'"

Miss Streatfield (says my master) could have quoted these lines in the Greek; his saying so piqued me, and piqued me because it was true. I wish I understood Greek! Mr. Thrale's preference of her to me never vexed me so much as my consciousness—or fear at least—that he has reason for his preference. She has ten times my beauty, and five times my scholarship: wit and knowledge has she none.

May, 1781.—Sophy Streatfield is an incomprehensible girl; here has she been telling me such tender passages of what passed between her and Mr. Thrale, that she half frights me somehow, at the same time declaring her attachment to Vyse[3] yet her willingness to marry Lord Loughborough. Good God! what an uncommon girl! and handsome almost to perfection, I think: delicate in her manners, soft in her voice, and strict in her principles: I never saw such a character, she is wholly out of my reach; and I can only say

[1] Dr. Beilby Porteus, afterwards Bishop of London (1731–1808). Madame D'Arblay refers to S. S. and "her darling bishop" (*sub anno* 1783).

[2] For Hector, John Hinchliffe, Master of Trinity (1768–1788), Bishop of Peterborough (1769-1794).

[3] Dr. William Vyse, Rector of Lambeth.

that the man who runs mad for Sophy Streatfield has no reason to be ashamed of his passion; few people, however, seem disposed to take her for life—everybody's admiration, as Mrs. Byron says, and nobody's choice.

Streatham, January 1st, 1782.—Sophy Streatfield has begun the new year nicely with a new conquest. Poor dear Doctor Burney! *he* is now the reigning favourite, and she spares neither pains nor caresses to turn that good man's head, much to the vexation of his family; particularly my Fanny, who is naturally provoked to see sport made of her father in his last stage of life by a young coquet, whose sole employment in this world seems to have been winning men's hearts on purpose to fling them away. How she contrives to keep bishops, and brewers, and doctors, and directors of the East India Company, all in chains so, and almost all at the same time, would amaze a wiser person than me; I can only say let us mark the end! Hester will perhaps see her out and pronounce, like Solon, on her wisdom and conduct.[1]

Fanny Burney at Streatham

August, 1779.—Fanny Burney has been a long time

[1] The end was as Mrs. Thrale prophesies. "S. S." died unmarried in 1835. In her *Diary* (for 1792) Madame D'Arblay tells of meeting her in the company of the wife of one of her old conquests. "We now met Mrs. Porteus, and who should be with her but the poor pretty S. S., whom so long I had not seen, and who now lately has been finally given up by her long sought and very injurious lover, Dr. Vyse.'

from me; I was glad to see her again; yet she makes me miserable too in many respects, so restlessly and apparently anxious, lest I should give myself airs of patronage or load her with the shackles of dependance. I live with her always in a degree of pain that precludes friendship—dare not ask her to buy me a ribbon—dare not desire her to touch the bell, lest she should think herself injured—lest she should forsooth appear in the character of Miss Neville, and I in that of the widow Bromley. See Murphy's *Know Your Own Mind.*

Fanny Burney has kept her room here in my house seven days, with a fever or something that she called a fever; I gave her every medicine and every slop with my own hand; took away her dirty cups, spoons, etc.; moved her tables: in short, was doctor, and nurse and maid—for I did not like the servants should have additional trouble lest they should hate her for it. And now,—with the true gratitude of a wit, she tells me that the world thinks the better of me for my civilities to her. It does? does it?

Miss Burney was much admired at Bath (1780); the puppy-men said, "She had such a drooping air and such a timid intelligence"; or, "a timid air," I think it was, "and a drooping intelligence"; never sure was such a collection of pedantry and affectation as filled Bath when we were on that spot. How everything else and everybody set off my gallant bishop. "Quantum lenta solent inter viburna Cupressi." Of all the people I ever heard read verse in my whole life, the best, the most perfect reader, is the Bishop of Peterboro' (Hinchliffe).

July 1st, 1780.—Mrs. Byron,[1] who really loves me, was disgusted at Miss Burney's carriage to me, who have been such a friend and benefactress to her: not an article of dress, not a ticket for public places, not a thing in the world that she could not command from me: yet always insolent, always pining for home, always preferring the mode of life in St. Martin's Street[2] to all I could do for her. She is a saucy-spirited little puss to be sure, but I love her dearly for all that; and I fancy she has a real regard for me, if she did not think it beneath the dignity of a wit, or of what she values more—the dignity of Dr. Burney's daughter—to indulge it. Such dignity! the Lady Louisa of Leicester Square![3] In good time!

1781.—What a blockhead Dr. Burney is to be always sending for his daughter home so! what a monkey! is she not better and happier with me than she can be anywhere else? Johnson is enraged at the silliness of their family conduct, and Mrs. Byron disgusted; I confess myself provoked excessively, but I love the girl so dearly—and the Doctor, too, for that matter, only that he has such odd notions of superiority in his own house, and will have his children under his feet forsooth, rather than let 'em live in peace, plenty, and comfort anywhere from home. If I did

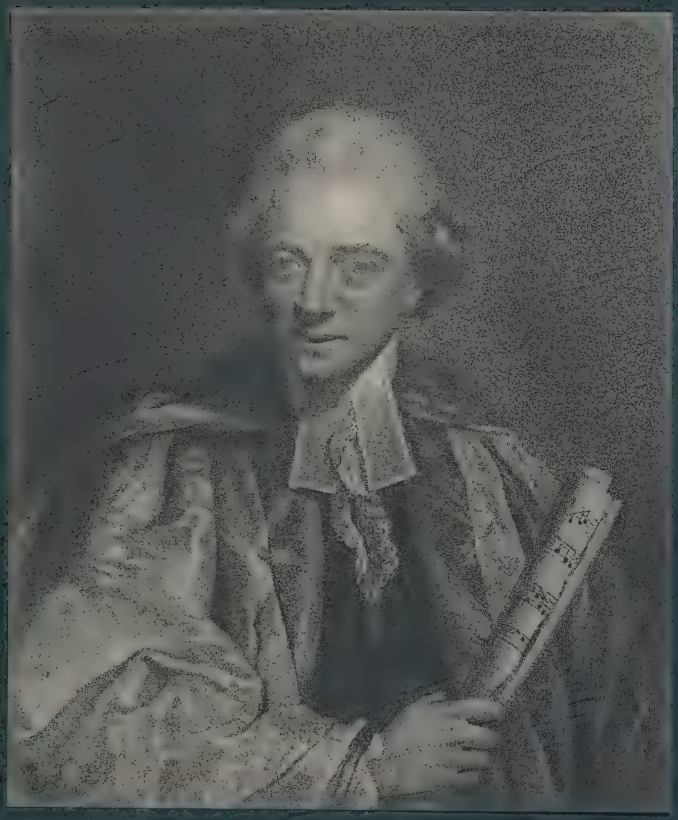
[1] Sophia Trevannion, wife of "Foul-weather Jack," grandmother of Lord Byron.

[2] No. 35 St. Martin's Street, where Dr. Burney lived until 1788. It was formerly Newton's house. A charming monograph has appeared on *The House in St. Martin's Street* by Miss Constance and Miss Ellen Hill.

[3] Alluding to a character in *Evelina*.

DR. CHARLES BURNEY

After painting by
SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS



not provide Fanny with every wearable—every wishable, indeed,—it would not vex me to be served so; but to see the impossibility of compensating for the pleasures of St. Martin's Street, makes one at once merry and mortified.

Dr. Burney did not like his daughter should learn Latin even of Johnson, who offered to teach her for friendship, because then she would have been as wise as himself forsooth, and Latin was too masculine for Misses. A narrow-souled goose-cap the man must be at last, agreeable and amiable all the while too, beyond almost any other human creature. Well, mortal man is but a paltry animal! the best of us have such drawbacks both upon virtue, wisdom, and knowledge.

The Gordon Riots

20th May, 1780.—I got back to Bath again and staid there till the riots[1] drove us all away the first week in June: we made a dawdling journey, cross country, to Brighthelmstone, where all was likely to be at peace: the letters we found there, however, shewed us how near we were to ruin here in the Borough: where nothing but the astonishing presence of mind shewed by Perkins[2] in amusing the mob with meat and drink and huzzas, till Sir Philip Jennings Clerke[3] could get the troops and pack up the counting-house bills, bonds, etc., and carry them, which he did, to Chelsea College for safety,—could have saved us from

[1] The Lord George Gordon Riots.
[2] See p. 21. [3] See p. 37.

actual undoing. The villains *had* broke in, and our brew-house would have blazed in ten minutes, when a property of 150,000*l.* would have been utterly lost, and its once flourishing possessors quite undone.

Let me stop here to give God thanks for so very undeserved, so apparent, an interposition of Providence in our favour.

I left Mr. Thrale at Brighthelmstone and came to town again to see what was left to be done: we have now got arms and mean to defend ourselves by force if further violence is intended. Sir Philip comes every day at some hour or another—good creature, how kind he is! and how much I ought to love him! God knows I am not in this case wanting to my duty. I have presented Perkins, with my Master's permission, with two hundred guineas, and a silver urn for his lady, with his own cypher on it and this motto—Mollis responsio, Iram avertit.

The Pleasant Path of Duty

Monday, January 29th, 1781.—So now we are to spend this winter in Grosvenor Square;[1] my master has taken a ready-furnished lodging-house there, and we go in to-morrow. He frightened me cruelly a while ago; he would have Lady Shelburne's[2] house, one of

[1] Cf. p. 123.

[2] Wife of Sir William Petty, first Marquis of Lansdowne and second Earl of Shelburne. Madame D'Arblay records in her *Diary* that after Mr. Thrale's death Streatham Place was rented by Lord Shelburne for three years. See p. 211.

the finest in London; he would buy, he would build, he would give twenty to thirty guineas a week for a house. Oh Lord, thought I, the people will sure enough throw stones at me now when they see a dying man go to such mad expenses, and all, as they will naturally think, to please a wife wild with the love of expense. This was the very thing I endeavoured to avoid by canvassing the borough for him,[1] in hopes of being through that means tyed to the brewhouse where I always hated to live till now, that I conclude his constitution lost, and that the world will say *I* tempt him in his weak state of body and mind to take a fine house for me at the flashy end of the town. . . . He however, dear creature, is as absolute, ay, and ten times more so, than ever, since he suspects his head to be suspected, and to Grosvenor Square we are going, and I cannot be sorry, for it will doubtless be comfortable enough to see one's friends commodiously, and I have long wished to quit *Harrow Corner*, to be sure; how could one help it? though I did

"Call round my casks each object of desire"

all last winter: but it was a heavy drag too, and what signifies resolving *never* to be pleased? I will make myself comfortable in my new habitation, and be thankful to God and my husband.

[1] Thrale unsuccessfully contested Southwark in 1780, his failure, according to Johnson, who wrote addresses, etc., for him, being due to his failing health. He died in the following year

Johnson and Baretti as Companions on a Journey

Well, now I have experienced the delights of a London winter, spent in the bosom of flattery, gayety, and Grosvenor Square; 'tis a poor thing, however, and leaves a void in the mind, but I have had my compting-house duties to attend, my sick master to watch, my little children to look after, and how much good have I done in any way? Not a scrap as I can see; the pecuniary affairs have gone on perversely: how should they chuse [otherwise] when the sole proprietor is incapable of giving orders, yet not so far incapable as to be set aside! Distress, fraud, folly, meet me at every turn, and I am not able to fight against them all, though endued with an iron constitution, which shakes not by sleepless nights or days severely fretted.

Mr. Thrale talks now of going to Spa and Italy again; how shall we drag him thither? A man who cannot keep awake four hours at a stroke, etc. Well! this will indeed be a tryal of one's patience; and who must go with us on this expedition? Mr. Johnson! —he will indeed be the only happy person of the party; he values nothing *under* heaven but his own mind, which is a spark *from* heaven, and that will be invigorated by the addition of new ideas. If Mr. Thrale dies on the road, Johnson will console himself by learning how it is to travel with a corpse: and, after all, such reasoning is the true philosophy—one's heart is a mere incumbrance—would I could leave mine behind. The children shall go to their sisters[1] at

[1] *I.e.* at school.

Kensington, Mrs. Cumyns may take care of them all. God grant us a happy meeting some *where* and some *time*!

Baretti should attend, I think; there is no man who has so much of every language, and can manage so well with Johnson, is so tidy on the road, so active too to obtain good accommodations. He is the man in the world, I think, whom I most abhor, and who *hates* and *professes* to *hate me* the most; but what does that signifie? He will be careful of Mr. Thrale and Hester whom he *does* love—and he won't strangle *me*, I suppose. Somebody we *must* have. Croza would court our daughter, and Piozzi could not talk to Johnson, nor, I suppose, do one any good but sing to one,—and how should we *sing songs in a strange land*? Baretti must be the man, and I will beg it of him as a favour. Oh, the triumph he will have! and the lyes he will tell![1]

Death of Mr. Thrale

On the Sunday, the 1st of April, I went to hear the Bishop of Peterborough[2] preach at May Fair Chapel, and though the sermon had nothing in it particularly pathetic, I could not keep my tears within my eyes. I spent the evening, however, at Lady Rothes',[3] and

[1] On Baretti's genius as a courier see pp. 170, 171.

[2] See p. 181.

[3] Jane Leslie, Countess of Rothes. Her first husband was Mr. G. R. Evelyn, her second Sir Lucas Pepys, the eminent physician. "There's a Countess for you!" says Madame

was cheerful. Found Sir John Lade,[1] Johnson, and Boswell, with Mr. Thrale, at my return to the Square. On Monday morning Mr. Evans[2] came to breakfast; Sir Philip[3] and Dr. Johnson to dinner—so did Baretti. Mr. Thrale eat voraciously—*so* voraciously that, encouraged by Jebb[4] and Pepys, who had charged me to do so, I checked him rather severely, and Mr. Johnson added these remarkable words: "Sir, after the denunciation of your physicians this morning, such eating is little better than suicide." He did not, however, desist, and Sir Philip said, he eat apparently in defiance of control, and that it was better for us to say nothing to him. Johnson observed that he thought so too; and that he spoke more from a sense of duty than a hope of success. Baretti and these two spent the evening with me, and I was enumerating the people who were to meet the Indian Ambassadors on the Wednesday. I had been to Negri's and bespoke an elegant entertainment.

On the next day, Tuesday the 3rd, Mrs. Hinchliffe[5] called on me in the morning to go see Webber's drawings of the South Sea rareties.[6] We met the Smelts,

D'Arblay (*Diary*, *sub anno* 1782); "Does not she deserve being an Earl? for such in fact she is, being Countess in her own right, and giving her own name to her children, who, though sons and daughters of Mr. Evelyn and Dr. Pepys—for she has been twice married—are called, the eldest Lord Lesley, and the rest the Honourable Mr. Lesleys, and Lady Harriet and Lady Mary."

[1] See p. 169.
[2] See p. 171.
[3] See p. 37.
[4] See p. 34.
[5] Wife of the Bishop of Peterborough.
[6] John Webber, R.A., accompanied Captain Cook's third voyage as draughtsman, 1776–1780.

the Ords,[1] and numberless *blues* there, and displayed our pedantry at our pleasure. Going and coming, however, I quite teazed Mrs. Hinchliffe with my low-spirited terrors about Mr. Thrale, who had not all this while one symptom worse than he had had for months; though the physicians this Tuesday morning agreed that a continuation of such dinners as he had lately made would soon dispatch a life so precarious and uncertain. When I came home to dress, Piozzi, who was in the next room teaching Hester to sing, began lamenting that he was engaged to Mrs. Locke[2] on the following evening, when I had such a world of company to meet these fine Orientals; he had, however, engaged Roncaglia and Sacchini to begin with, and would make a point of coming himself at nine o'clock if possible. I gave him the money I had collected for his benefit —35*l.* I remember it was—a banker's note—and burst out o' crying, and said, I was sure I should not go to it. The man was shocked, and wondered what I meant. Nay, says I, 'tis mere lowness of spirits, for Mr. Thrale is very well now, and is gone out in his carriage to spit cards, as I call'd it—*sputar le carte* Just then came a letter from Dr. Pepys, insisting to speak with me in the afternoon, and though there was

[1] Leonard Smelt was deputy-governor to the royal princes (1771–1781). Mrs. Ord was a great friend of Fanny Burney, "a woman of social distinction who did not quite belong to the 'Bas bleus,' but visited and received them." (A. R. Ellis.)

[2] Frederica Augusta Schaub, daughter of Lady Schaub (of Gray's *Long Story*), and wife of William Locke of Norbury Park, a distinguished collector. Mrs. Locke became one of Fanny Burney's dearest friends. Her *Diary* was intended originally only for her sisters, "Daddy Crisp," and Mrs. Locke.

nothing very particular in the letter considering our intimacy, I burst out o' crying again, and threw myself into an agony, saying, I was sure Mr. Thrale would dye.

Miss Owen [1] came to dinner, and Mr. Thrale came home so well! and in such spirits! he had invited more people to my concert, or conversazione, or musical party, of the next day, and was delighted to think what a show we should make. He eat, however, more than enormously. Six things the day before, and eight on this day, with strong beer in such quantities! the very servants were frighted, and when Pepys came in the evening he said this could not last—either there must be *legal* [2] restraint or certain death. Dear Mrs. Byron [3] spent the evening with me, and Mr. Crutchley [4] came from Sunning-hill to be ready for the morrow's flash. Johnson was at the Bishop of Chester's. I went down in the course of the afternoon to see after my master as usual, and found him not asleep, but sitting with his legs up—*because*, as he express'd it. I kissed him, and said how good he was to be so careful of himself. He enquired who was above, but had no disposition to come up stairs. Miss Owen and Mrs. Byron now took their leave. The Dr. had been gone about twenty minutes when Hester went down to see her papa, and

[1] In her *Early Diary* Fanny Burney thus disposes of Miss Owen:—"A relation [of Mrs. Thrale]; good-humoured and *sensible enough*; she is a sort of butt, and, as such, a general favourite."

[2] (*Note* by Mrs. Thrale.) "I rejected all propositions of the sort, and said, as he had got the money, he had the best right to throw it away. . . . I should always prefer my husband to my children: let him do his *own* way."

[3] See p. 184.

[4] See p. 41.

found him on the floor. What's the meaning of this? says she, in an agony. I chuse it, replies Mr. Thrale firmly; I lie so o' purpose. She ran, however, to call his valet, who was gone out—happy to leave him so particularly *well*, as he thought. When my servant went instead, Mr. Thrale bid him begone, in a firm tone, and added that he was very well and chose to lie so. By this time, however, Mr. Crutchley was run down at Hetty's intreaty, and had sent to fetch Pepys back. He was got but into Upper Brook Street, and found his friend in a most violent fit of the apoplexy, from which he only recovered to relapse into another, every one growing weaker as his strength grew less, till six o'clock on Wednesday morning, 4th April, 1781, when he died. Sir Richard Jebb, who was fetched at the beginning of the distress, seeing death certain, quitted the house without even prescribing. Pepys did all that could be done, and Johnson, who was sent for at eleven o'clock, never left him, for while breath remained he still hoped. I ventured in once, and saw them cutting his clothes off to bleed him, but I saw no more.

Johnson at the Southwark Brewery

Streatham, 1*st May*, 1781.—I have now appointed three days a week to attend at the counting-house.

If an angel from heaven had told me twenty years ago that the man I knew by the name of *Dictionary Johnson* should one day become partner with me in a great trade, and that we should jointly or separately

sign notes, drafts, etc., for three or four thousand pounds of a morning, how unlikely it would have seemed ever to happen! Unlikely is no word tho', —it would have seemed *incredible*, neither of us then being worth a groat, God knows, and both as immeasurably removed from commerce as birth, literature, and inclination could get us. Johnson, however, who desires above all other good the accumulation of new ideas, is but too happy with his present employment;[1] and the influence I have over him, added to his own solid judgment and a regard for truth, will at last find it in a small degree difficult to win him from the dirty delight of seeing his name in a new character flaming away at the bottom of bonds and leases.

A Woman of Business

The power of emptying one's head of a great thing and filling it with little ones to amuse care, is no small power, and I am proud of being able to write Italian verses while I am bargaining 150,000*l.*, and settling an event of the highest consequence to my own and my children's welfare. David Barclay,

[1] "Lord Lucan tells a very good story, which, if not precisely exact, is certainly characteristical: that when the sale of Thrale's brewery was going forward, Johnson appeared bustling about, with an inkhorn and pen in his button-hole, like an exciseman; and on being asked what he really considered to be the value of the property which was to be disposed of, answered, 'We are not here to sell a parcel of boilers and vats, but the potentiality of growing rich beyond the dreams of avarice.'" (Boswell, *sub anno* 1781.) See p. 42.

[2] See p. 41.

THRALE PLACE, STREATHAM

After painting by
SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS

the rich Quaker, will treat for our brewhouse, and the negotiation is already begun. My heart palpitates with hope and fear—my head is bursting with anxiety and calculation; yet I can listen to a singer and translate verses about a knife.

Mrs. Montagu has been here; she says I ought to have a statue erected to me for my diligent attendance on my compting-house duties. The *wits* and the *blues* (as it is the fashion to call them) will be happy enough, no doubt, to have me safe at the brewery—*out of their way*.

A very Strange Thing

A very strange thing happened in the year 1776, and I never wrote it down,—I must write it down now. A woman came to London from a distant county to prosecute some business, and fell into distress; she was sullen and silent, and the people with whom her affairs connected her advised her to apply for assistance to some friend. What friends can I have in London? says the woman, nobody here knows anything of me. One can't tell *that*, was the reply. Where have you lived? I have wandered much, says she, but I am originally from Litchfield. Who did you know in Litchfield in your youth? Oh, nobody of any note, I'll warrant: I knew one *David Garrick*, indeed, but I once heard that he turned strolling player, and is probably dead long ago; I also knew an obscure man, *Samuel Johnson*, very good he was too; but who can know anything of

poor Johnson? I was likewise acquainted with *Robert James*, a quack doctor.[1] *He* is, I suppose, no very reputable connection if I could find him. Thus did this woman name and discriminate the three best known characters in London — perhaps in Europe.

"Oh, Brave Mrs. Montagu"

"Such," says Mrs. Montagu, "is the dignity of Mrs. Thrale's virtue, and such her superiority in all situations of life, that nothing now is wanting but an earthquake to show how she will behave on *that* occasion." Oh, brave Mrs. Montagu! She is a monkey, though, to quarrel with Johnson so about Lyttelton's life:[2] if he was a great character, nothing said of him in that book can hurt him; if he was not a great character, they are bustling about nothing.

Woodcocks and Fowlers

Mr. Crutchley[3] lives now a great deal with me; the business of executor to Mr. Thrale's will makes much of his attendance necessary, and it begins to have its full effect in seducing and attaching him to the house,—Miss Burney's being always about me is probably another reason for his close attendance, and

[1] Dr. James was educated at Lichfield. He had a Cambridge degree, and the only reason for calling him a quack was his patenting his famous powder in which "Dr." Goldsmith had such pathetic faith.

[2] See p. 144.

[3] See p. 41.

I believe it is so. What better could befall Miss Burney, or indeed what better could befall *him*, than to obtain a woman of honour, and character, and reputation for superior understanding? I would be glad, however, that he fell honestly in love with her, and was not trick'd or trapp'd into marriage, poor fellow; he is no match for the arts of a novel-writer. A mighty particular character Mr. Crutchley is: strangely mixed up of meanness and magnificence; liberal and splendid in large sums and on serious occasions, narrow and confined in the common occurrences of life; warm and generous in some of his motives, frigid and suspicious, however, for eighteen hours at least out of the twenty-four; likely to be duped, though always expecting fraud, and easily disappointed in realities, though seldom flattered by fancy. He is supposed by those that knew his mother and her connections to be Mr. Thrale's natural son, and in many things he resembles him, but not in person: as he is both ugly and awkward. Mr. Thrale certainly believed he was his son, and once told me as much when Sophy Streatfield's affair[1] was in question, but nobody could persuade him to court the S.S. Oh! well does the Custom-house officer Green[2] say,—

> "Coquets! leave off affected arts,
> Gay fowlers at a flock of hearts;
> Woodcocks to shun your snares have skill,
> You show so plain you strive to kill."

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[1] See p. 178 *et seq.*

[2] Matthew Green, a clerk in the Custom-house, author of *The Spleen*, 1737.

UNDISGRACED BY COMMERCIAL CONNECTIONS

3rd June, 1781.—Well! here have I, with the grace of God and the assistance of good friends, completed —I really think very happily—the greatest event of my life. I have sold my brewhouse to Barclay, the rich Quaker, for 135,000*l.*, to be in four years' time paid. I have by this bargain purchased peace and a stable fortune, restoration to my original rank in life, and a situation undisturbed by commercial jargon, unpolluted by commercial frauds, undisgraced by commercial connections. They who succeed me in the house have purchased the power of being rich beyond the wish of rapacity,[1] and I have procured the improbability of being made poor by flights of the fairy, speculation. 'Tis thus that a woman and men of feminine minds always—I speak popularly—decide upon life, and chuse certain mediocrity before probable superiority; while, as Eton Graham[2] says sublimely—

> "Nobler souls,
> Fir'd with the tedious and disrelish'd good,
> Seek their employment in acknowledg'd ill,
> Danger, and toil, and pain."

On this principle partly, and partly on worse, was dear Mr. Johnson something unwilling—but not much

[1] There is a curious similarity here to Johnson's phrase, "the potentiality of becoming rich beyond the dreams of avarice." See p. 194. (Hayward.)

[2] George Graham, a master at Eton, author of *Telemachus*, a masque, 1763.

at last—to give up a trade by which in some years 15,000*l.* or 16,000*l.* had undoubtedly been got, but by which, in some years, its possessor had suffered agonies of terror and tottered twice upon the verge of bankruptcy. Well! if thy own conscience acquit, who shall condemn thee? Not, I hope, the future husbands of our daughters, though I should think it likely enough; however, as Johnson says very judiciously, they must either think right or wrong: if they think right, let us now think with them; if wrong, let us never care what they think. So adieu to brewhouse, and borough wintering; adieu to trade, and tradesmen's frigid approbation; may virtue and wisdom sanctify our contract, and make buyer and seller happy in the bargain! . . . Mrs. Montagu has sent me her approbation in a letter exceedingly affectionate and polite. 'Tis over now, tho', and I'll clear my head of it and all that belongs to it; I will go to church, give God thanks, receive the sacrament and forget the frauds, follies, and inconveniences of a commercial life this day.

Mrs. Thrale meets Piozzi

Brighton, July 1780.—I have picked up Piozzi here, the great Italian singer.[1] He is amazingly like my father. He shall teach Hester.

[1] The date of Mrs. Thrale's first meeting with Piozzi is uncertain. It was probably on the occasion of the famous evening party at Dr. Burney's house in St. Martin's Street when Mrs. Thrale burlesqued her future husband behind his back. The story of that evening is told in detail by Madame D'Arblay in her pompous *Memoirs of Dr. Burney*. Madame D'Arblay refers

A Prodigious Favourite

13 *August*, 1780.—Piozzi is become a prodigious favourite with me,[1] he is so intelligent a creature, so discerning, one can't help wishing for his good opinion; his singing surpasses everybody's for taste, tenderness, and true elegance; his hand on the forte piano too is so soft, so sweet, so delicate, every tone goes to the heart, I think, and fills the mind with emotions one would not be without, though inconvenient enough sometimes. He wants nothing from us: he comes for his health he says: I see nothing ail the man but pride. The newspapers yesterday told what all the musical folks gained, and set Piozzi down 1200*l.* o' year.

Cross Currents

August, 1781.—I begin to wish in good earnest that Miss Burney should make impression on Mr. Crutchley. I think she honestly loves the man, who in his turn

the scene to the year 1777, but her recollection of dates is not convincing evidence. The fragment from her sister Charlotte's diary describing the same event is undated. When Mrs. Thrale says that "the beginning of my acquaintance with Piozzi was at Brighton, after the riots, August, '80 or so," this is not inconsistent with her having met him before. The matter has been discussed with disproportionate gravity, and it has too rashly been assumed that *meeting* and *acquaintance* are synonymous.

[1] Mrs. Ellis, in her scholarly edition of the *Early Diary of Frances Burney*, alters this date to 1781, and uses this entry as a means of attacking Mrs. Thrale. The dates of *Thraliana* are much more to be relied on than Madame D'Arblay's.

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS

After painting by
SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS

appears to be in love with some one else—Hester, I fear. Oh! that would indeed be unlucky! People have said so a long while, but I never thought it till now; young men and women will always be serving one so, to be sure, if they live at all together, but I depended on Burney keeping him steady to herself. Queeny[1] behaves like an angel about it. Mr. Johnson says the name of Crutchley comes from *croix lea*, the cross meadow; *lea* is a meadow, I know, and *crutch*, a crutch stick, is so called from having the handle go *crosswise*.

Family Affairs

September, 1781.—My five fair daughters too! I have so good a pretence to wish for long life to see them settled. Like the old fellow in *Lucian*, one is never at a loss for an excuse. They are five lovely creatures to be sure, but they love not me. Is it my fault or theirs?

12*th October*, 1781.—Yesterday was my wedding-day; it was a melancholy thing to me to pass it without the husband of my youth.

> "Long tedious years may neither moan,
> Sad, deserted, and alone;
> May neither long condemned to stay
> Wait the second bridal day!!!"[2]

Let me thank God for my children, however, my fortune, and my friends, and be contented if I cannot be happy.

[1] Hester Thrale.

[2] *Note by Mrs. T.:* "Samuel Wesley's verses, making part of an epithalamium."

15*th October*, 1781.—My maid Margaret Rice dreamed last night that my eldest daughter was going to be married to Mr. Crutchley, but that Mr. Thrale *himself* prevented her. An odd thing to me, who think Mr. Crutchley is his son.

"My Poor Dr. Johnson"

Saturday, 9*th May*, 1782.—To-day I bring home to Streatham my poor Dr. Johnson: he went to town a week ago by the way of amusing himself, and got so very ill[1] that I thought I should never get him home alive.

A Burnt Sonnet

25*th November*, 1781.—I have got my Piozzi home at last; he looks thin and battered, but always kindly upon me, I think. He brought me an Italian sonnet written in his praise by Marco Capello, which I instantly translated of course; but he, prudent creature, insisted on my burning it, as he said it would inevitably get about the town how *he* was praised, and how Mrs. Thrale translated and echoed the praises, so that, says he, I shall be torn in pieces, and you will have some *infamità* said of you that will make you hate the sight of me. He was so earnest with me that I could not

[1] In a letter to Boswell a month later Dr. Johnson says, "This year has afflicted me with a very irksome and severe disorder. My respiration has been much impeded, and much blood has been taken away. I am now harassed by a catarrhous cough."

resist, so burnt my sonnet, which was actually very pretty; and now I repent I did not first write it into the *Thraliana*. Over leaf, however, shall go the translation, which happens to be done very closely, and the last stanza is particularly exact. I must put it down while I remember it:

1

Favoured of Britain's pensive sons
Though still thy name be found,
Though royal Thames where'er he runs
Returns the flattering sound,

2

Though absent thou, on every joy
Her gloom privation flings,
And Pleasure, pining for employ,
Now droops her nerveless wings,

3

Yet since kind Fates thy voice restore
To charm our land again,—
Return not to their rocky shore,
Nor tempt the angry main.

4

Nor is their praise of so much worth,
Nor is it justly given,
That angels sing to them on earth
Who slight the road to heaven.

He tells me—Piozzi does—that his own country manners greatly disgusted him, after having been used

to ours; but Milan is a comfortable place, I find. If he does not fix himself for life here, he will settle to lay his bones at Milan. The Marquis D'Araciel, his friend and patron, who resides there, divides and disputes his heart with me: I shall be loth to resign it.

Fears of Johnson's Health

17th December, 1781.—Dear Mr. Johnson is at last returned; he has been a vast while away to see his country folks at Litchfield. My fear is lest he should grow paralytick,—there are really some symptoms already discoverable, I think, about the mouth particularly. He will drive the gout away so when it comes, and it must go *somewhere*. Queeny works hard with him at the classics; I hope she will be *out* of leading-strings at least before he gets *into* them, as poor women say of their children.

New Year Resolutions

1st January, 1782.—Let me not, while censuring the behaviour of others, however, give cause of censure by my own. I am beginning a new year in a new character. May it be worn decently yet lightly! I wish not to be rigid and fright my daughters by too much severity. I will not be wild and give them reason to lament the levity of my life. Resolutions, however, are vain. To pray for God's grace is the sole way to obtain it—"Strengthen Thou, O Lord, my virtue and

my understanding, preserve me from temptation, and acquaint me with myself; fill my heart with Thy love, restrain it by Thy fear, and keep my soul's desires fixed wholly on that place where only true joys are to be found, through Jesus Christ our Lord,—Amen."

January, 1782.—*If* nothing of all these misfortunes [illness, etc.], however, befall one; *if* for my sins God should take from me my monitor, my friend, my inmate, my dear Doctor Johnson;[1] *if* neither I should marry, nor the brewhouse people break; *if* the ruin of the nation should not change the situation of affairs so that one could not receive regular remittances from England: and *if* Piozzi should not pick him up a wife and fix his abode in this country,—*if*, therefore, and *if* and *if* and *if* again all should conspire to keep my present resolution warm, I certainly would, at the close of the four years from the sale of the Southwark estate, set out for Italy, with my two or three eldest girls, and see what the world could show me.

Town Talk

Streatham, 4*th January*, 1782.—I have taken a house in Harley Street for these three months next ensuing, and hope to have some society,—not company tho': crowds are out of the question, but people will not

[1] "Travelling with Mr. Johnson *I* cannot bear, and leaving him behind *he* could not bear, so his life or death must determine the execution or laying aside my schemes. I wish it were within reason to *hope* he could live four years." (Mrs. Piozzi's marginal note.)

come hither on short days, and 'tis too dull to live all alone so. The world will watch me at first, and think I come o' husband-hunting for myself or my fair daughters, but when I have behaved prettily for a while, they will change their mind.

Harley Street, 14th January, 1782.—The first seduction comes from Pepys.[1] I had a letter to-day desiring me to dine in Wimpole Street, to meet Mrs. Montagu and a whole *army of blues*, to whom I trust my refusal will afford very pretty speculation . . . and they may settle my character and future conduct at their leisure. Pepys is a worthless fellow at last; he and his brother run about the town, spying and enquiring what Mrs. Thrale is to do this winter, what friends she is to see, what men are in her confidence, how soon she will be *married*, etc.; the brother Dr.—the Medico,[2] as we call him—lays wagers about me, I find; God forgive me, but they'll make me hate them both, and they are no better than two fools for their pains, for I was willing to have taken them to my heart.

"Friend, Father, Guardian, Confident"

1st February, 1782.—Here is Mr. Johnson ill, very ill indeed, and—I do not see what ails him; 'tis repelled gout, I fear, fallen on the lungs and breath of course. What shall we do for him? If I lose *him*, I am more than undone; friend, father, guardian, con-

[1] Sir William Weller Pepys, Master in Chancery.

[2] Sir Lucas Pepys, President of the Royal College of Physicians.

fident!—God give me health and patience. What shall I do?

Reported Suitors

Harley Street, 13th April, 1782.—When I took off my mourning, the watchers watched me very exactly, "but they whose hands were mightiest have found nothing": so I shall leave the town, I hope, in a good disposition towards me, though I am sullen enough with the town for fancying me such an amorous idiot that I am dying to enjoy every filthy fellow. God knows how distant such dispositions are from the heart and constitution of H. L. T. Lord Loughboro',[1] Sir Richard Jebb,[2] Mr. Piozzi, Mr. Selwyn,[3] Dr. Johnson, every man that comes to the house, is put in the papers for me to marry. In good time, I wrote to-day to beg the *Morning Herald* would say no more about me, good or bad.

Any Man's Equal

Streatham, 17th April, 1782.—I am returned to Streatham, pretty well in health and very sound in heart, notwithstanding the watchers and the wager-layers, who think more of the charms of their sex by half than I who know them better. Love and friendship are distinct things, and I would go through fire to serve many a man whom nothing less than fire would force me to go to bed to. Somebody mentioned

[1] See p. 179.
[2] See p. 34.
[3] George Selwyn, the wit.

my going to be married t'other day, and Johnson was joking about it. I suppose, Sir, said I, they think they are doing me honour with these imaginary matches, when, perhaps the man does not exist who would do me honour by marrying me! This, indeed, was said in the wild and insolent spirit of Baretti, yet 'tis nearer the truth than one would think for. A woman of passable person, ancient family, respectable character, uncommon talents, and three thousand a year, has a right to think herself any man's equal, and has nothing to seek but return of affection from whatever partner she pitches on. To marry for love would therefore be rational in me, who want no advancement of birth or fortune, and *till I am in love*, I will not marry, nor perhaps then.

Resolve to leave Streatham

22nd August, 1782.—An event of no small consequence to our little family must here be recorded in the *Thraliana*. After having long intended to go to Italy for pleasure, we are now settling to go thither for convenience. The establishment of expense here at Streatham is more than my income will answer; my lawsuit with Lady Salusbury turns out worse in the event and infinitely more costly than I could have dreamed on; 8000*l.* is supposed necessary to the payment of it, and how am I to raise 8000*l.*? My trees will (after all my expectations from them) fetch but 4000*l.*, the money lent Perkins on his bond 1600*l.*, the Hertfordshire copyholds may perhaps be worth

1000*l.*, and where is the rest to spring from? I must go abroad and save money. To show Italy to my girls, and be showed it by Piozzi, has long been my dearest wish, but to leave Mr. Johnson shocked me, and to take him appeared impossible. His recovery, however, from an illness we all thought dangerous, gave me courage to speak to him on the subject, and this day (after having been let blood) I mustered up resolution to tell him the necessity of changing a way of life I had long been displeased with. I added that I had mentioned the matter to my eldest daughter, whose prudence and solid judgment, unbiassed by passion, is unequalled, as far as my experience has reached; that she approved the scheme, and meant to partake it, though of an age when she might be supposed to form connections here in England—attachments of the tenderest nature; that she declared herself free and resolved to follow my fortunes, though perfectly aware temptations might arise to prevent me from ever returning—a circumstance she even mentioned herself.

Mr. Johnson thought well of the project, and wished me to put it early in execution: seemed less concerned at parting with me than I wished him: thought his pupil Miss Thrale quite right in forbearing to marry young, and seemed to entertain no doubt of living to see us return rich and happy in two or three years' time. He told Hester in my absence that he would not go with me if I asked him. See the importance of a person to himself. I fancied Mr. Johnson could not have existed without me, forsooth, as we have now lived together for above eighteen years. I

have so fondled him in sickness and in health. Not a bit of it. He feels nothing in parting with me, nothing in the least; but thinks it a prudent scheme, and goes to his books as usual. This is philosophy and truth; he always said he hated a *feeler*. . . .

The persecution I endure from men too who want to marry me—in good time—is another reason for my desiring to be gone. I wish to marry none of them, and Sir Philip's[1] teazing me completed my mortification; to see that one can rely on *nobody*! The expenses of this house, however, which are quite past my power to check, is the true and rational cause of our departure. In Italy we shall live with twice the respect and at half the expense we do here; the language is familiar to me and I love the Italians; I take with me all I love in the world except my two baby daughters, who will be left safe at school; and since Mr. Johnson cares nothing for the loss of my personal friendship and company, there is no danger of anybody else breaking their hearts. My sweet Burney[2] and Mrs. Byron[3] will perhaps think they are sorry, but my consciousness that no one *can* have the cause of concern that Johnson has, and my conviction that he has *no concern at all*, shall cure me of lamenting friends left behind.[4]

[1] Sir P. J. Clerke (see p. 37).

[2] "I have determined, therefore, to do all in my power to bear this blow steadily." (Madame D'Arblay's *Diary* for August 12, 1782.)

[3] See p. 184.

[4] "I begin to see (now everything shows it) that Johnson's connection with me is merely an interested one; he *loved* Mr. Thrale, I believe, but only wished to find in me a careful nurse

August 28th, 1782.—He (Piozzi) thinks still more than he says, that I shall give him up; and if Queeney made herself more amiable to me, and took the proper methods—I suppose I should.

20 *September* 1782, *Streatham*.—And now I am going to leave Streatham (I have let the house and grounds to Lord Shelburne,[1] the expense of it eat me up) for three years, where I lived—never happily indeed, but always easily: the more so perhaps from the total absence of love and ambition—

> "Else these two passions by the way
> Might chance to show us scurvy play."

To Marry or not to Marry

1st October, 1782.—Now! that dear little discerning creature, Fanny Burney, says I'm in love with Piozzi: very likely; he is so amiable, so honourable, so much above his situation by his abilities, that if

> Fate had not fast bound her
> With Styx nine times round her,
> Sure musick and love were victorious.

But if he is ever so worthy, ever so lovely, he is *below me* forsooth! In what is he below me? In virtue? I would I were above him. In understanding? I

and humble friend for his sick and his lounging hours; yet I really thought he could not have *existed* without *my conversation* forsooth! He cares more for my roast beef and plum pudden, which he now devours too dirtily for endurance; and since he is glad to get rid of me, I'm sure I have good cause to desire the getting rid of him." (Mrs. Piozzi's marginal note.)

[1] See p. 186.

would mine were from this instant under the guardianship of his. In birth? To be sure he is below me in birth, and so is almost every man I know or have a chance to know. But he is below me in fortune: is mine sufficient for us both?—more than amply so. Does he deserve it by his conduct, in which he has always united warm notions of honour with cool attention to œconomy, the spirit of a gentleman with the talents of a professor? How shall any man deserve fortune, if he does not? But I am the guardian of five daughters by Mr. Thrale, and must not disgrace *their* name and family. Was then the man my mother chose for me of higher extraction than him I have chosen for myself? No,—but his fortune was higher. . . . I wanted fortune then, perhaps: do I want it now?—Not at all; but I am not to think about myself; I married the first time to please my mother, I must marry the second time to please my daughter. I have always sacrificed my own choice to that of others, so I must sacrifice it again: but why? Oh, because I am a woman of superior understanding, and must not for the world degrade myself from my situation in life. But if I *have* superior understanding, let me at least make use of it for once, and rise to the rank of a human being conscious of its own power to discern good from ill. The person who has uniformly acted by the will of others has hardly that dignity to boast.

But once again: I am guardian to five girls; agreed: will this connection prejudice their bodies, souls, or purse? My marriage may assist *my* health, but I suppose it will not injure *theirs*. Will his company

or companions corrupt their morals? God forbid; if I did not believe him one of the best of our fellow beings, I would reject him instantly. Can it injure their fortunes? Could he impoverish (if he would) five women, to whom their father left 20,000*l.* each, independent almost of possibilities?—To what then am I guardian? to their pride and prejudice?[1] and is anything else affected by the alliance? Now for more solid objections. Is not the man of whom I desire protection, a foreigner? unskilled in the laws and language of our country? Certainly. Is he not, as the French say, *Arbitre de mon sort?* and from the hour he possesses my person and fortune, have I any power of decision how or where I may continue or end my life? Is not the man, upon the continuance of whose affection my whole happiness depends, *younger* than myself,[2] and is it wise to place one's happiness on the continuance of *any* man's affection? Would it not be painful to owe his appearance of regard more to his honour than his love? and is not my person, already faded, likelier to fade sooner than his? On the other hand, is his life a good one? and would it not be lunacy even to risque the wretchedness of losing all situation in the world for the sake of living with a man one loves, and then to lose both companion and consolation? When I lost Mr. Thrale, every one was officious to comfort and to soothe me; but which of my children

[1] A recollection, perhaps, of the famous phrase which appeared at the end of Fanny Burney's *Cecilia*, published in June of this year. Jane Austen took it from the same source.

[2] "He was half a year *older* when our registers were both examined." (Mrs. Piozzi's marginal note.)

or quondam friends would look with kindness upon Piozzi's widow? If I bring children by him, must they not be Catholics, and must not I live among people the *ritual* part of whose religion I disapprove?

These are *my* objections, these *my* fears: not those of being censured by the world, as it is called, a composition of vice and folly, though 'tis surely no good joke to be talked of

> "By each affected she that tells my story,
> And blesses her good stars that *she* was prudent."

These objections would increase in strength, too, if my present state was a happy one, but it really is not. I live a quiet life, but not a pleasant one. My children govern without loving me; my servants devour and despise me; my friends caress and censure me; my money wastes in expences I do not enjoy, and my time in trifles I do not approve. Every one is made insolent, and no one comfortable; my reputation unprotected, my heart unsatisfied, my health unsettled. I will, however, resolve on nothing. I will take a voyage to the Continent in spring, enlarge my knowledge and repose my purse. Change of place may turn the course of these ideas, and external objects supply the room of internal felicity. If he follow me, I may reject or receive at pleasure the addresses of a man who follows on *no explicit promise*, nor much probability of success, for I would really wish to marry no more without the consent of my children (such I mean as are qualified to give their opinions); and how should *Miss Thrales* approve of my marrying *Mr. Piozzi*? Here then I rest, and will torment my mind no longer, but commit

myself, as he advises, to the hand of Providence, and all will end *all' ottima perfezzione*.

The Victim of Rumour

October, 1782.—There is no mercy for me in this island. I am more and more disposed to try the continent. One day the paper rings with my marriage to Johnson, one day to Crutchley,[1] one day to Seward.[2] I give no reason for such impertinence, but cannot deliver myself from it. Whitbred, the rich brewer, is in love with me too; oh, I would rather, as Ann Page says, be set breast deep in the earth and bowled to death with turnips.

Mr. Crutchley bid me make a curtsey to my daughters for keeping me out of a goal (*sic*), and the newspapers insolent as he! How shall I get through? How shall I get through? I have not deserved it of any of them, as God knows.

Philip Thicknesse[3] put it about Bath that I was a poor girl, a mantua maker, when Mr. Thrale married me. It is an odd thing, but Miss Thrales like, I see, to have it believed.

[1] See p. 41.

[2] See p. 68.

[3] Apothecary, soldier, and author. His best known work is *Junius Discovered* (1789), in which he advanced the claim of Horne Tooke.

The Irish Volunteers

At Brighthelmstone, whither I went when I left Streatham, 7th October 1782, I heard this comical epigram about the Irish Volunteers:

> There's not one of us all, my brave boys, but would rather
> Do ought than offend great King George our good father;
> But our country, you know, my dear lads, is our *mother*,
> And that is a much surer side than the other.

Confessio Amantis

I had looked ill, or perhaps appeared to feel so much, that my eldest daughter would, out of tenderness perhaps, force me to an explanation. I could, however, have evaded it if I would; but my heart was bursting, and partly from instinctive desire of unloading it—partly, I hope, from principle, too—I called her into my room and fairly told her the truth; told her the strength of my passion for Piozzi, the impracticability of my living without him, the opinion I had of his merit, and the resolution I had taken to marry him. Of all this she could not have been ignorant before. I confessed my attachment to him and her together with many tears and agonies one day at Streatham; told them, both that I wished I had two hearts for their sakes, but having only one I would break it between them, and give them each *ciascheduno la metà! After that* conversation she consented to go abroad with me, and even appointed the place (Lyons), to which Piozzi meant to follow us. He and she talked long together

MADAME D'ARBLAY
(FANNY BURNEY)

After painting by
SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS

on the subject; yet her never mentioning it again made me fear she was not fully apprized of my intent, and though her concurrence might have been more easily obtained when left only to my influence in a distant country, where she would have had no friend to support her different opinion—yet I scorned to take such mean advantage, and told her my story *now*, with the winter before her in which to take her measures—her guardians at hand—all displeased at the journey: and to console her private distress I called into the room to her my own bosom friend, my beloved Fanny Burney, whose interest as well as judgment goes all against my marriage; whose skill in life and manners is superior to that of any man or woman in this age or nation; whose knowledge of the world, ingenuity of expedient, delicacy of conduct, and zeal in the cause, will make her a counsellor invaluable, and leave me destitute of every comfort, of every hope, of every expectation.

Such are the hands to which I have cruelly committed thy cause—my honourable, ardent, artless Piozzi!! Yet I should not deserve the union I desire with the most disinterested of all human hearts, had I behaved with less generosity, or endeavoured to gain by cunning what is withheld by prejudice. Had I set my heart upon a scoundrel, I might have done virtuously to break it and get loose; but the man I love, I love for his honesty, for his tenderness of heart, his dignity of mind, his piety to God, his duty to his mother, and his delicacy to me. In being united to this man only can I be happy in this world, and short will be my stay in it, if it is not passed with him.

Brighthelmstone, 16*th November*, 1782.—For him I have been contented to reverse the laws of nature, and request of my child that concurrence which, at my age and a widow, I am not required either by divine or human institutions to ask even of a parent. The life I gave her she may now more than repay, only by agreeing to what she will with difficulty prevent; and which, if she does prevent, will give her lasting remorse; for those who stab *me* shall hear me groan: whereas if she will—but how can she?—gracefully or even compassionately consent; if she will go abroad with me upon the chance of his death or mine preventing our union, and live with me till she is of age— . . . perhaps there is no heart so callous by avarice, no soul so poisoned by prejudice, no head so feather'd by foppery, that will forbear to excuse her when she returns to the rich and the gay—for having saved the life of a mother thro' compliance, extorted by anguish, contrary to the received opinions of the world.

Brighthelmstone, 19*th November*, 1782.—What is above written, though intended only to unload my heart by writing it, I shewed in a transport of passion to Queeney and to Burney. Sweet Fanny Burney cried herself half blind over it; said there was no resisting such pathetic eloquence, and that, if she was the daughter instead of the friend, she should be tempted to attend me to the altar; but that, while she possessed her reason, nothing should seduce her to approve what reason itself would condemn: that children, religion, situation, country, and character—besides the diminution of fortune by the certain loss of 800*l.* a year, were too much to sacrifice for any *one*

man. If, however, I were resolved to make the sacrifice, *a la bonne heure!* it was an astonishing proof of an attachment very difficult for mortal man to repay.

I will talk no more about it.

Love and Law

London, Nov. 27, 1782.—I have given my Piozzi some hopes—dear, generous, prudent, noble-minded creature; he will hardly permit himself to believe it ever can be—*come quei promessi miracoli,* says he, *che non vengono mai.* For rectitude of mind and native dignity of soul I never saw his fellow.

Dec. 1, 1782.—The guardians have met upon the scheme of putting our girls in Chancery. I was frighted at the project, not doubting but the Lord Chancellor would stop us from leaving England, as he would certainly see no joke in three young heiresses, his wards, quitting the kingdom to frisk away with their mother into Italy: besides that I believe Mr. Crutchley proposed it merely for a stumbling-block to my journey, as he cannot bear to have Hester out of his sight.

Nobody much applauded my resolution in going, but Johnson and Cator[1] said they would not concur in stopping me by violence, and Crutchley was forced to content himself with intending to put the ladies under legal protection as soon as we should be across the sea. This measure I much applaud, for if I die or marry in Italy their fortunes will be safer in

[1] See p. 41.

Chancery than any how else. Cator[1] said *I* had a right to say that going to Italy would benefit the children as much as *they* had to say it would *not*; but I replied that as I really did not mean anything but my own private gratification by the voyage, nothing should make me say I meant *their* good by it; and that it would be like saying I eat roast beef to mend my daughters' complexions. The result of all is that we certainly *do go*. I will pick up what knowledge and pleasure I can here this winter to divert myself, and perhaps my *compagno fidele* in distant climes and future times, with the recollection of England and its inhabitants, all which I shall be happy and content to leave for him.

Mrs. Thrale and her Daughters

January 29, 1783.—Adieu to all that's dear, to all that's lovely; I am parted from my life, my soul, my Piozzi. If I can get health and strength to write my story here,'tis all I wish for now—oh misery! . . . The cold dislike of my eldest daughter I thought might wear away by familiarity with his merit, and that we might live tolerably together, or, at least, part friends

[1] "Cator said likewise that the attorney's bill ought to be paid by the ladies as a bill of Mr. Thrale's, but I replied that perhaps I might marry and give my estate away, and if so it would be unjust that they should pay the bill which related to that estate only. Besides, if I should leave it to Hester, says I, . . . why should Susan and Sophy and Cecilia and Harriet pay the lawyer's bill for their sister's land! He agreed to this plea, and I will live on bread and water, but I will pay Norris myself. 'Tis but being a better huswife in pins." (Note by Mrs. Piozzi.)

—but no; her aversion increased daily, and she communicated it to the others; they treated *me* insolently, and *him* very strangely—running away whenever he came as if they saw a serpent—and plotting with their governess—a cunning Italian—how to invent lyes to make me hate him, and twenty such narrow tricks. By these means the notion of my partiality took air, and whether Miss Thrale sent him word slily or not I cannot tell, but on the 25th January, 1783, Mr. Crutchley came hither to conjure me not to go to Italy; he had heard such things, he said, and by *means* next to *miraculous*. The next day, Sunday, 26th, Fanny Burney came, said I must marry him instantly or give him up; that my reputation would be lost else.

I actually groaned with anguish, threw myself on the bed in an agony which my fair daughter beheld with frigid indifference. She had indeed never by one tender word endeavoured to dissuade me from the match, but said, coldly, that if I *would* abandon my children I *must*; that their father had not deserved such treatment from me; that I should be punished by Piozzi's neglect, for that she knew he hated me; and that I turned out my offspring to chance for his sake, like puppies in a pond to swim or drown according as Providence pleased; that for her part she must look herself out a place like the other servants, for my face would she never see more. "Nor write to me?" said I. "I shall not, madam," replied she with a cold sneer, "easily find out your address; for you are going you know not whither, I believe."

Susan and Sophy said nothing at all, but they taught

the two young ones to cry "Where are you going, mama? will you leave us and die as our poor papa did?" There was no standing *that*, so I wrote my lover word that my mind was all distraction, and bid him come to me the next morning, 27th January—my birthday—and spent the Sunday night in torture not to be described. My falsehood to my Piozzi, my strong affection for him, the incapacity I felt in myself to resign the man I so adored, the hopes I had so cherished, inclined me strongly to set them all at defiance, and go with him to church to sanctify the promises I had so often made him; while the idea of abandoning the children of my first husband, who left me so nobly provided for, and who depended on my attachment to his offspring, awakened the voice of conscience, and threw me on my knees to pray for *His* direction who was hereafter to judge my conduct. His grace illuminated me, His power strengthened me, and I flew to my daughter's bed in the morning and told her my resolution to resign my own, my dear, my favourite purpose, and to prefer my children's interest to my love. She questioned my ability to make the sacrifice; said one word from him would undo all my —[Here two pages are missing.]

I told Dr. Johnson and Mr. Crutchley three days ago that I had determined—seeing them so averse to it—that I would not go abroad, but that, if I did not leave England, I *would* leave London, where I had not been treated to my mind, and where I had flung away much unnecessary money with little satisfaction; that I was greatly in debt, and somewhat like distress'd: that borrowing was always bad, but of one's

children worst: that Mr. Crutchley's objection to their lending me their money when I had a mortgage to offer as security, was unkind and harsh:[1] that I would go live in a little way at Bath till I had paid all my debts and cleared my income: that I would no more be tyrannized over by people who hated or people who plundered me, in short that I would retire and save my money and lead this uncomfortable life no longer. They made little or no reply, and I am resolved to do as I declared. I will draw in my expenses, lay by every shilling I can to pay off debts and mortgages, and perhaps—who knows? I may in six or seven years be freed from all incumbrances, and carry a clear income of 2500*l.* a year and an estate of 500*l.* in land to the man of my heart. May I but live to discharge my obligations to those who *hate me*; it will be paradise to discharge them to him who *loves me.*

April, 1783.—I will go to Bath: nor health, nor strength, nor my children's affections, have I. My daughter does not, I suppose, much delight in this scheme, but why should I lead a life of delighting her, who would not lose a shilling of interest or an ounce of pleasure to save my life from perishing? When I was near losing my existence from the contentions of my mind, and was seized with a temporary delirium in Argyll Street, she and her two eldest sisters laughed at my distress, and observed to dear Fanny Burney, that it was *monstrous droll.* *She* could hardly suppress her indignation.

Piozzi was ill. . . . A sore throat, Pepys said it was, with four ulcers in it: the people about me said it had

[1] See p. 215.

been lanced, and I mentioned it slightly before the girls. "Has he cut his own throat?" says Miss Thrale in her quiet manner. This was less inexcusable because she hated him, and the other was her sister; though, had she exerted the good sense I thought her possessed of, she would not have treated him so: had she adored, and fondled, and respected him as he deserved from her hands, and from the heroic conduct he shewed in January when he gave into her hands, that dismal day, all my letters containing promises of marriage, protestations of love, etc., who knows but she might have kept us separated? But never did she once caress or thank me, never treat him with common civility, except on the very day which gave her hopes of our final parting. Worth while to be sure it was, to break one's heart for her! The other two are, however, neither wiser nor kinder; all swear by her I believe, and follow her footsteps exactly. Mr. Thrale had not much heart, but his fair daughters have none at all.

A Courageous Parting

Sunday morning, 6th April, 1783.—I have been very busy preparing to go to Bath and save my money; the Welch settlement has been examined and rewritten by Cator's[1] desire in such a manner that a will can revoke it or charge the estate, or anything. I signed my settlement yesterday, and, before I slept, wrote my will, charging the estate with pretty near 3000*l.* But what signifies it? My daughters deserve no thanks from my tenderness and they want no

[1] See pp. 41, 219, 220.

pecuniary help from my purse—let me provide in some measure, for my dear, my absent Piozzi.—God give me strength to part with him courageously.—I expect him every instant to breakfast with me for the *last time*.—Gracious Heavens, what words are these! Oh no, for mercy may we but meet again! and without diminished kindness. Oh my love, my love!

We did meet and part courageously.—I persuaded him to bring his old friend Mecci, who goes abroad with him and has long been his confidant, to keep the meeting from being too tender, the separation from being too poignant—his presence was a restraint on our conduct, and a witness of our vows, which we renewed with fervour, and will keep sacred in absence, adversity, and age. When all was over I flew to my dearest, loveliest friend, my Fanny Burney, and poured all my sorrows into her tender bosom.[1]

Verses to Divert

Come, friendly muse! some rhimes discover
With which to meet my dear at Dover,
Fondly to bless my wandering lover
And make him dote on dirty Dover.
Call each fair wind to waft him over,
Nor let him linger long at Dover,
But there from past fatigues recover,
And write his love some lines from Dover.

[1] "My dear Mrs. Thrale spent all the morning in my room with me." (Madame D'Arblay's *Diary* for 6th April, 1783.)

Too well he knows his skill to move her,
To meet him two years hence at Dover,
When happy with her handsome rover
She'll bless the day she din'd at Dover.

Russell Street, Bath, Thursday, 8th May, 1783.—I sent him these verses to divert him on his passage. Dear angel! *this day* he leaves a nation to which he was sent for my felicity perhaps, I hope for his own. May I live but to make him happy, and hear him say 'tis *me* that makes him so!

Johnson—"Poor Fellow"

Bath, June 24th, 1783.—A stroke of the palsy has robbed Johnson of his speech, I hear. Dreadful event! and I at a distance.[1] Poor fellow! A letter from himself, *in his usual style*, convinces me that none of his faculties have failed, and his physicians say that all present danger is over.

Pride and Prejudice

June, 1783.—Most sincerely do I regret the sacrifice I have made of health, happiness, and the society of a worthy and amiable companion, to the pride and prejudice[2] of three insensible girls, who would see

[1] "I have, indeed, had a very frightful blow. On the 17th of last month, about three in the morning, as near as I can guess, I perceived myself almost totally deprived of speech." (Johnson, *Letter to Boswell*, July 3, 1783.)

[2] See note p. 213.

nature perish without concern. . . . were their gratification the cause.

The two youngest [1] have, for ought I see, hearts as impenetrable as their sister. They will all starve a favourite animal—all see with unconcern the afflictions of a friend; and when the anguish I suffered on their account last winter, in Argyll Street, nearly took away my life and reason, the younger ridiculed as a jest those agonies which the eldest despised as a philosopher. When all is said, they are exceeding valuable girls—beautiful in person, cultivated in understanding, and well-principled in religion: high in their notions, lofty in their carriage, and of intents equal to their expectations; wishing to raise their own family by connections with some more noble . . . and superior to any feeling of tenderness which might clog the wheels of ambition. What, however, is my state? who am condemned to live with girls of this disposition? to teach without authority; to be heard without esteem; to be considered by them as their superior in fortune, while I live by the money borrowed from them; and in good sense, when they have seen me submit my judgment to theirs at the hazard of my life and wits. Oh, 'tis a pleasant situation! and whoever would wish, as the Greek lady phrased it, to teize himself and repent of his sins, let him borrow his children's money, be in love against their interest and prejudice, forbear to marry by their advice, and then shut himself up and live with them.

[1] The two youngest are not included in this enumeration.

The Hand of God

Bath, Nov. 30th, 1783.—Sophia will live and do well; I have saved my daughter, perhaps obtained a friend. They are weary of seeing me suffer so, and the eldest beg'd me yesterday not to sacrifice my life to her convenience. She now saw my love of Piozzi was incurable, she said. Absence had no effect on it, and my health was going so fast she found that I should soon be useless either to her or him. It was the hand of God and irresistible, she added, and begged me not to endure any longer such unnecessary misery.

So now we may be happy if we will, and now I trust *some* [(*sic*) *query* "*no*"*?*] other cross accident will start up to torment us; I wrote my lover word that he might come and fetch me, but the Alps are covered with snow, and if his prudence is not greater than his affection —— my life will yet be lost, for it depends on his safety. Should he come at my call, and meet with any misfortune on the road . . . death, with accumulated agonies, would end me. May Heaven avert such insupportable distress!

Good for Evil

Dec. 1783.—My dearest Piozzi's Miss Chanon[1] is in distress. I will send her 10*l.* Perhaps he loved

[1] "A fit of jealousy seized me the other day: some viper had stung me up to a notion that my Piozzi was fond of a Miss Chanon. I called him gently to account." (*Thraliana*, Jan. 1783.)

her; perhaps she loved *him*; perhaps both; yet I have and will have confidence in his honour. I will not suffer love or jealousy to narrow a heart devoted to *him*. He would assist her if he were in England, and *she* shall not suffer for his absence, tho' I *do*. She and her father have reported many things to my prejudice; she will be ashamed of herself when she sees me forgive and assist her. O Lord, give me grace so to return good for evil as to obtain Thy gracious favour who died to procure the salvation of Thy professed enemies. 'Tis a good Xmas work!

Miss Thrale Relents

Bath, Jan. 27th, 1784.—On this day twelvemonths . . . oh dreadfullest of all days to me! did I send for my Piozzi and tell him we must part. The sight of my countenance terrified Dr. Pepys, to whom I went into the parlour for a moment, and the sight of the agonies I endured in the week following would have affected anything but interest, avarice, and pride personified, . . . with such, however, I had to deal, so my sorrows were unregarded. Seeing them continue for a whole year, indeed, has mollified my strong-hearted companions, and they *now* relent in earnest and wish me happy: I would now therefore be *loath to dye*, yet how shall I recruit my constitution so as to live? The pardon certainly did arrive the very instant of execution—for I was ill beyond all power of description, when my eldest daughter, bursting into tears, bid me call home the man of my heart, and not

expire by slow torture in the presence of my children, who had my life in their power. "You are dying *now*," said she. "I know it," replied I, "and I should die in peace had I but seen him *once again*." "Oh send for him," said she, "send for him quickly!" "He is at Milan, child," replied I, "a thousand miles off!" "Well, well," returns she, "hurry him back, or I myself will send him an express." At these words I revived, and have been mending ever since. This was the first time that any of us had named the name of Piozzi to each other since we had put our feet into the coach to come to Bath. I had always thought it a point of civility and prudence never to mention what could give nothing but offence, and cause nothing but disgust, while they desired nothing less than a revival of old uneasiness; so we were all silent on the subject, and Miss Thrale thought him dead.

"Nobody's Affair but our Own"

28*th May*, 1784.—Here is the most sudden and beautiful spring ever seen after a dismal winter: so may God grant me a renovation of comfort after my many and sharp afflictions. I have been to London for a week to visit Fanny Burney, and to talk over my intended (and I hope approaching) nuptials,[1] with Mr. Borghi: a man, as far as I can judge in so short an acquaintance with him, of good sense and real honour:—who loves my Piozzi, *likes* my conversation,

[1] The use of the comma here is fascinating. It saves Mr. Borghi, as at the eleventh hour, from any suspicion of scandal.

and wishes to serve us sincerely. He has recommended Duane to take my power of attorney, and Cator's loss will be the less felt. Duane's name is as high as the Monument,[1] and his being known familiarly to Borghi will perhaps quicken his attention to our concerns.

Dear Burney, who loves me *kindly* but the world *reverentially*, was, I believe, equally pained as delighted with my visit:[2] ashamed to be seen in my company, much of her fondness for me must of course be diminished; yet she had not chatted freely so long with anybody but Mrs. Philips,[3] that my coming was a comfort to her. We have told all to her father, and he behaved with the utmost propriety.

Nobody likes my settling at Milan except myself and Piozzi: but I think 'tis nobody's affair but our own: it seems to me quite irrational to expose ourselves to unnecessary insults, and by going straight to Italy all will be avoided.

More Verses to Divert

10*th June*, 1784.—I sent these lines to meet Piozzi on his return. They are better than those he liked so last year at Dover:[4]

[1] Matthew Duane, a famous conveyancer and collector of coins, a F.R.S. and F.S.A. (1707–1785).

[2] "The rest of that week I devoted almost wholly to sweet Mrs. Thrale, whose society was truly the most delightful of cordials to me, however, at times, mixed with bitters the least palatable." (Madame D'Arblay's *Diary* for May 17, 1784.)

[3] Her sister, Susan Burney, newly married to Captain Phillips.

[4] See p. 225.

Over mountains, rivers, vallies,
See my love returns to Calais,
After all their taunts and malice,
Ent'ring safe the gates of Calais,
While delay'd by winds he dallies,
Fretting to be kept at Calais,
Muse, prepare some sprightly sallies
To divert my dear at Calais,
Say how every rogue who rallies
Envies him who waits at Calais
For her that would disdain a Palace
Compar'd to Piozzi, Love and Calais.

"The Happiest Day of my whole Life"

24th June, 1784.—He is set out sure enough, here are letters from Turin to say so. . . . Now the Misses *must* move; they are very loath to stir: from affection perhaps, or perhaps from art—'tis difficult to know.—Oh 'tis, yes, it is from tenderness, they want me to go with them to see Wilton, Stonehenge, etc.—I *will* go with them to be sure.

27th June, Sunday.—We went to Wilton, and also to Fonthill; they make an admirable and curious contrast between ancient magnificence and modern glare: Gothic and Grecian again, however. A man of taste would rather possess Lord Pembroke's seat, or indeed a single room in it; but one feels one should live happier at Beckford's.—My daughters parted with me at last prettily enough *considering* (as the phrase is). We shall perhaps be still better friends apart

GEORGE THE THIRD

After painting by
SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS

than together. Promises of correspondence and kindness were very sweetly reciprocated, and the eldest wished for Piozzi's safe return very obligingly.

I fancy two days more will absolutely bring him to Bath. The present moments are critical and dreadful, and would shake stronger nerves than mine! Oh Lord, strengthen me to do Thy will I pray.

28th June.—I am not *yet sure* of seeing him again —not *sure* he lives, not *sure* he loves me *yet*. . . . Should anything happen now!! Oh, I will not trust myself with such a fancy: it will either kill me or drive me distracted.

Bath, 2nd July, 1784.—The happiest day of my whole life, I think—Yes, quite the happiest: my Piozzi came home yesterday and dined with me; but my spirits were too much agitated, my heart was too much dilated. I was too *painfully* happy *then*; my sensations are more quiet to-day, and my felicity less tumultuous.[1]

Mrs. Piozzi

25th July, 1784.—I am returned from church the happy wife of my lovely faithful Piozzi . . . subject of my prayers, object of my wishes, my sighs, my reverence, my esteem.—His nerves have been horribly shaken, yet he lives, he loves me, and will be mine for ever. He has sworn, in the face of God and the whole Christian Church; Catholics, Protestants, all are witnesses.[2]

[1] "We shall go to London about the affairs, and there be married in the Romish Church." (Marginal note by Mrs. Piozzi.)

[2] "We were married according to the Romish Church in one

The Limit of Patience

Milan, 27th Nov., 1784.—I have got Dr. Johnson's picture here, and expect Miss Thrale's with impatience. I do love them dearly, as ill as they have used me, and always shall. Poor Johnson did not *mean* to use me ill.[1] He only grew upon indulgence till patience could endure no further.

The Satirists at Work

Ode to Mrs. Thrale, by Samuel Johnson, LL.D., on their supposed approaching Nuptials:

If e'er my fingers touched the lyre,
In satire fierce, in pleasure gay,
Shall not my Thralia's smiles inspire,
Shall Sam refuse the sportive lay?

My dearest lady, view your slave,
Behold him as your very *Scrub*:[2]
Ready to write as author grave,
Or govern well the brewing tub.

To rich felicity thus raised,
My bosom glows with amorous fire;
Porter no longer shall be praised,
'Tis I Myself am *Thrale's Entire*.[3]

---

of our excursions to London, by Mr. Smith, Padre Smit as they called him, chaplain to the Spanish Ambassador. . . . Mr. Morgan tacked us together at St. James's, Bath, 25th July, 1784, and on the first day I think of September, certainly the first week, we took leave of England." (Note by Mrs. Piozzi.) Cf. p. 51.

[1] Johnson died on Dec. 13, 1784.

[2] Mrs. Sullen's man-of-all-work in Farquhar's *Beaux' Stratagem*.

[3] "Whose fun was this? It is better than the other." (Mrs. Piozzi.)

Cervisial coctor's viduate dame,
Opinst thou this gigantick frame,
Procumbing at thy shrine,
Shall catenated by thy charms,
A captive in thy ambient arms
Perennially be thine.[1]

Baretti's Insults

3rd November, 1784.—Yesterday I received a letter from Mr. Baretti, full of the most flagrant and bitter insults concerning my late marriage with Mr. Piozzi, against whom, however, he can bring no heavier charge than that he disputed on the road with an innkeeper concerning the bill in his last journey to Italy; while he accuses me of murder and fornication in the grossest terms, such as I believe have scarcely ever been used even to his old companions in Newgate,[2] whence he was released to scourge the families which cherished, and bite the hands that have since relieved him. Could I recollect any provocation I ever gave the man, I should be less amazed, but he heard, perhaps, that Johnson had written me a rough letter, and thought he would write me a brutal one: like the Jewish king, who, trying to imitate Solomon without his understanding, said, "My father whipped you with whips, but I will whip you with scorpions."

[1] "Whose silly fun was this? Soame Jenyns?" (Mrs. Piozzi).

[2] See p. 172. In 1769 Baretti was acquitted at the Old Bailey on a charge of murdering an assailant in the Haymarket. "Never," says Boswell, "did such a constellation of genius enlighten the awful Sessions-house, emphatically called Justice-hall; Mr. Burke, Mr. Garrick, Mr. Beauclerk, and Mr. Johnson: and undoubtedly their favourable testimony had due weight with the court and jury."

Disinterested Correspondents

Milan, Dec. 7. — I correspond constantly and copiously with such of my daughters as are willing to answer my letters, and I have at last received one cold scrap from the eldest, which I instantly and tenderly replied to. Mrs. Lewis too, and Miss Nicholson,[1] have had accounts of my health, for I found *them* disinterested and attached to me: those who led the stream, or watched which way it ran, that they might follow it, were not, I suppose, desirous of my correspondence, and till they are so, shall not be troubled with it.

"These Cursed Wits"

January, 1785.—I see the English newspapers are full of gross insolence to me: all burst out, as I guessed it would, upon the death of Dr. Johnson. But Mr. Boswell (who I plainly see is the author) should let the *dead* escape from his malice at least. I feel more shocked at the insults offered to Mr. Thrale's memory than at those cast on Mr. Piozzi's person. My present husband, thank God! is well and happy, and able to defend himself: but dear Mr. Thrale, that had fostered these cursed wits so long! to be stung by their malice even in the grave, is too cruel:—

"Nor church, nor churchyards, from such fops are free."[2]—Pope.

[1] Mrs. Lewis was the wife of Dr. John Lewis, Dean of Ossory. For Miss Nicholson see p. 49.

[2] Probably misquoted for—

"No place is sacred, not the church is free."

Prologue to the Satires. (Hayward.)

Johnson's Biographers

25th Jan., 1785.—I have recovered myself sufficiently to think what will be the consequence to me of Johnson's death, but must wait the event, as all thoughts on the future in this world are vain. Six people have already undertaken to write his life, I hear, of which Sir John Hawkins, Mr. Boswell, Tom Davies,[1] and Dr. Kippis[2] are four. Piozzi says he would have me add to the number, and so I would, but that I think my anecdotes too few, and am afraid of saucy answers if I send to England for others. The saucy answers *I* should disregard, but my heart is made vulnerable by my late marriage, and I am certain that, to spite me, they would insult my husband.

Poor Johnson! I see they will leave *nothing untold* that I laboured so long to keep secret; and I was so very delicate *in trying to conceal his* [*fancied*][3] *insanity* that I retained no proofs of it, or hardly any, nor even mentioned it in these books, lest by my dying first *they* might be printed and the secret (for such I thought it) discovered. I used to tell him in jest that his biographers would be at a loss concerning some orange-peel he used to keep in his pocket, and many a joke we had about the lines that would be published. Rescue me out of their hands, my dear, and do it yourself, said he; Taylor,[4] Adams,[5] and

[1] See p. 177.
[2] Dr. Andrew Kippis, editor of the *Biographia Britannica*.
[3] ["Sic in the MS." Hayward.]
[4] See p. 118.
[5] William Adams, Master of Pembroke.

Hector [1] will furnish you with juvenile anecdotes, and Baretti will give you all the rest that you have not already, for I think Baretti is a lyar only when he speaks of himself. Oh, said I, Baretti told me yesterday that you got by heart six pages of Machiavel's History once, and repeated them thirty years afterwards word for word. Why this is a *gross* lye, said Johnson, I never read the book at all. Baretti too told me of you (said I) that you once kept sixteen cats in your chamber, and yet they scratched your legs to such a degree, you were forced to use mercurial plaisters for some time after. Why this (replied Johnson) is an unprovoked lye indeed; I thought the fellow would not have broken through divine and human laws thus to make puss his heroine, but I see I was mistaken.

Use and Abuse of Influence

1786.—It has always been my maxim never to influence the inclination of another: Mr. Thrale, in consequence, lived with me seventeen and a half years, during which time I tried but twice to persuade him to *do* anything, and but once, and that in vain, to let anything alone. Even my daughters, as soon as they could reason, were always allowed, and even encouraged, by me to reason their own way, and not suffer their respect or affection for me to mislead their judgment. Let us keep the mind clear if we can from

[1] Edmund Hector, a surgeon in Birmingham, schoolfellow of Johnson.

prejudices, or truth will never be found at all. The worst part of this disinterested scheme is, that other people are not of my mind, and if I resolve not to use my lawful influence to make my children love me, the lookers-on will soon use their unlawful influence to make them hate me: if I scrupulously avoid persuading my husband to become a Lutheran or be of the English church, the Romanists will be diligent to teach him all the narrowness and bitterness of their own unfeeling sect, and soon persuade him that it is not delicacy but weakness makes me desist from the combat. Well! let me do right, and leave the consequences in His hand who alone sees every action's motive and the true cause of every effect: let me endeavour to please God, and to have only my own faults and follies, not those of another, to answer for.

An Infamous Proceeding

1787,[1] *May 1st.*—It was not wrong to come home after all, but very right. The Italians would have said we were afraid to face England, and the English would have said we were confined abroad in prisons or convents or some stuff. I find Mr. Smith [2] (one of our daughter's guardians) told that poor baby Cecilia a fine staring tale how my husband locked me up at Milan and fed me on bread and water, to make the child hate Mr. Piozzi. Good God! What infamous proceeding was this! My husband never saw the fellow, so could not have provoked him.

[1] Mr. and Mrs. Piozzi returned to London in March 1787.

[2] See p. 41.

A Fine Assembly

May 19th.—We had a fine assembly last night indeed: in my best days I never had finer; there were near a hundred people in the rooms[1] which were besides much admired.

Surrounded with Friends

1788, *January 1st.*—How little I thought this day four years that I should celebrate this 1st of January, 1788, here at Bath, surrounded with friends and admirers! The public partial to me, and almost every individual whose kindness is worth wishing for, sincerely attached to my husband.

Mrs. Byron[2] is converted by Piozzi's assiduity, she really likes him now: and sweet Mrs. Lambert[3] told everybody at Bath she was in love with him.

I have passed a delightful winter in spite of them, caressed by my friends, adored by my husband, amused with every entertainment that is going forward: what need I think about three sullen Misses? . . . and yet!——

"Treacherous Burneys"

August 1st.—Baretti has been grossly abusive in the *European Magazine* to me: *that* hurts me but

[1] In Hanover Square. [2] See p. 184.

[3] Widow of General Lambert, and sister of Sir Philip Jennings Clerke.

little; what shocks me is that those treacherous Burneys should abet and puff him.[1] He is a most ungrateful because unprincipled wretch; but I *am* sorry that anything belonging to Dr. Burney should be so monstrously wicked.

Mrs. Garrick

1789, *January 17th.*—Mrs. Siddons dined in a coterie of my unprovoked enemies yesterday at Porteous's. She mentioned our concerts, and the Erskines[2] lamented their absence from one we gave two days ago, at which Mrs. Garrick was present and gave a good report to the *Blues*. Charming Blues! blue with venom I think; I suppose they begin to be ashamed of their paltry behaviour. Mrs. Garrick, more prudent than any of them, left a loophole for returning friendship to fasten through, and it *shall* fasten: that woman has lived a *very wise life*, regular and steady in her conduct, attentive to every word she speaks and every step she treads, decorous in her manners and graceful in her person. My fancy forms the Queen just like Mrs. Garrick: they are countrywomen[3] and have, as the phrase is, had a hard card to play; yet never lurched by tricksters nor subdued by superior powers, they will rise from the table unhurt either by others or themselves . . . having played a

[1] Fanny Burney in her *Diary* (1788) speaks of "Baretti's late attack upon her which I heard with great concern." See p. 63.

[2] See p. 179.

[3] Mrs. Garrick was a Viennese dancer, Eva Maria Violetti.

saving game. *I* have run risques to be sure, that I have; yet—

> "When after some distinguished leap
> She drops her pole and seems to slip,
> Straight gath'ring all her active strength,
> She rises higher half her length";

and better than *now* I have never stood with the world in general, I believe. May the books[1] just sent to press confirm the partiality of the Public!

A Rattle on Purpose

1789, *January.*—I have a great deal more prudence than people suspect me for: they think I act by chance while I am doing nothing in the world unintentionally, and have never, I dare say, in these last fifteen years uttered a word to husband, or child, or servant, or friend, without being very careful what it should be. Often have I spoken what I have repented after, but that was want of *judgment*, not of *meaning*. What I said I meant to say at the time, and thought it best to say, . . . I do not err from haste or a spirit of rattling, as people think I do: when I err, 'tis because I make a false conclusion, not because I make no conclusion at all; when I rattle, I rattle on purpose.

[1] *Observations and Reflections*, etc. (the Travel Book), 2 vols., 1789.

Mortified Critics

1789, *May 1st.*—Mrs. Montagu wants to make up with me again. I dare say she does; but I will not be taken and left even at the pleasure of those who are much nearer and dearer to me than Mrs. Montagu. We want no flash, no flattery. I never had more of either in my life, nor ever lived half so happily: Mrs. Montagu wrote creeping letters when she wanted my help, or foolishly *thought* she did, and then turned her back upon me and set her adherents to do the same. I despise such conduct, and Mr. Pepys,[1] Mrs. Ord,[2] etc. now sneak about and look ashamed of themselves —well they may!

1790, *March 18th.*—I met Miss Burney at an assembly last night—'tis six years since I had seen her: she appeared most fondly rejoyced, in good time! and Mrs. Locke,[3] at whose house we stumbled on each other, pretended that she had such a regard for me, etc. I answered with ease and coldness, but in exceedingly good humour: and we talked of the King and Queen, his Majesty's illness and recovery . . . and all ended, as it should do, with perfect indifference.

I saw *Master Pepys*[1] too and Mrs. Ord; and only see how foolish and how mortified the people do but look.

Barclay and Perkins[4] live very genteelly. I dined with them at our brewhouse one day last week. I felt *so* oddly in the old house where I had lived so long.

[1] Sir W. Pepys. See p. 206.
[2] See p. 191.
[3] See p. 191.
[4] See p. 21.

The Pepyses find out that they have used me very ill . . . I hope they find out too that I do not care. Seward [1] too sues for reconcilement underhand . . . so they do all; and I sincerely forgive them—but, like the linnet in *Metastasio*—

"Cauto divien per prova
Nè più tradir si fà."

"When lim'd, the poor bird thus with eagerness strains,
Nor regrets his torn wing while his freedom he gains:
The loss of his plumage small time will restore,
And once tried the false twig—it shall cheat him no more."

Wedding Anniversary at Streatham

1790, *July 28th.*—We have kept our seventh wedding day and celebrated our return to *this house* [2] with prodigious splendour and gaiety. Seventy people to dinner. . . . Never was a pleasanter day seen, and at night the trees and front of the house were illuminated with coloured lamps that called forth our neighbours from all the adjacent villages to admire and enjoy the diversion. Many friends swear that not less than a thousand men, women, and children might have been counted in the house and grounds, where, though all were admitted, nothing was stolen, lost, or broken, or even damaged—a circumstance almost incredible; and which gave Mr. Piozzi a high opinion of English gratitude and respectful attachment.

[1] See p. 68.

[2] Streatham Place.

Death of Barretti

May 8, 1789.—Baretti is dead. Poor Baretti! I am sincerely sorry for him, and as Zanga[1] says, "If I lament thee, sure thy worth was great." He was a manly character, at worst, and died, as he lived, less like a Christian than a philosopher, refusing all spiritual or corporeal assistance, both which he considered useless to him, and perhaps they were so. He paid his debts, called in some single acquaintance, told him he was dying, and drove away that *Panada* conversation which friends think proper to administer at sick-bedsides with becoming steadiness, bid him write his brothers word that he was dead, and gently desired a woman who waited to leave him quite alone. No interested attendants watching for ill-deserved legacies, no harpy relatives clung round the couch of Baretti. He died!

> "And art thou dead? so is my enmity:
> I war not with the dead."

Baretti's papers—manuscripts I mean—have been all burnt by his executors without examination, they tell me. So great was his character as a mischief-maker, that Vincent and Fendall saw no nearer way to safety than that hasty and compendious one. Many people think 'tis a good thing for me, but as I never trusted the man, I see little harm he could have done me.

[1] In Young's *The Revenge.*

Journalese

There seems to be a language now appropriated to the newspapers, and a very wretched and unmeaning language it is. Yet a certain set of expressions are so necessary to please the diurnal readers, that when Johnson and I drew up an advertisement for charity once, I remember the people altered our expressions and substituted their own, with good effect too. The other day I sent a Character of Baretti to *The World*, and read it two mornings after more altered than improved in my mind: but no matter: they will talk of *wielding* a language, and of *barbarous* infamy,—sad stuff, to be sure, but such is the taste of the times. They altered even my quotation from Pope; but that was too impudent.

Lines to Piozzi

While Piozzi was gone to London I worked at my Travel Book, and wrote it in two months complete—but 'tis all to correct and copy over again. While my husband was away I wrote him these lines: he staid just a fortnight:

I think I've worked exceeding hard
To finish five score pages.
I write you this upon a card,
In hopes you'll pay my wages.
The servants all get drunk or mad,
This heat their blood enrages,
But your return will make me glad,—
That hope one pain assuages.

To shew more kindness, we defy
All nations and all ages,
And quite prefer your company
To all the seven sages.
Then hasten home, oh, haste away!
And lengthen not your stages;
We then will sing, and dance and play,
And quit awhile our cages.

On the Appearance of Boswell's *Johnson*

May, 1791.—Mr. Boswell's book is coming out, and the wits expect me to tremble: what will the fellow say . . . that has not been said already?

May, 1791.—I have been now laughing and crying by turns, for two days, over Boswell's book. That poor man should have a *Bon Bouillon* and be put to bed . . . he is quite light-headed, yet madmen, drunkards, and fools tell truth, they say . . . and if Johnson was to me the back friend he has represented . . . let it cure me of ever making friendship more with any human being.

25th May, 1791.—The death of my son, so suddenly, so horribly produced before my eyes now suffering from the tears then shed . . . so shockingly brought forward in Boswell's two guinea book, made me very ill this week, very ill indeed; it would make the modern friends all buy the work I fancy, did they but know how sick the *ancient* friends had it in their power to make me, but I had more wit than tell any of 'em. And what is the folly among all these fellows of wishing we may know one another in the next

world. . . . Comical enough! when we have only to expect deserved reproaches for breach of confidence and cruel usage. Sure, sure I hope, rancour and resentment will at least be put off in the last moments: . . . sure, surely, we shall meet no more, except on the great day when each is to answer to other and before other. . . . After *that* I hope to keep better company than any of them.

Sir John Salusbury Piozzi Salusbury

Italy is ruined and England threatened. I have sent for one little boy from among my husband's nephews. He was christened John Salusbury:[1] he shall be naturalised, and then we will see whether he will be more grateful and natural and comfortable than Miss Thrales have been to the mother they have at length driven to desperation.

Marriage of "Queeny"

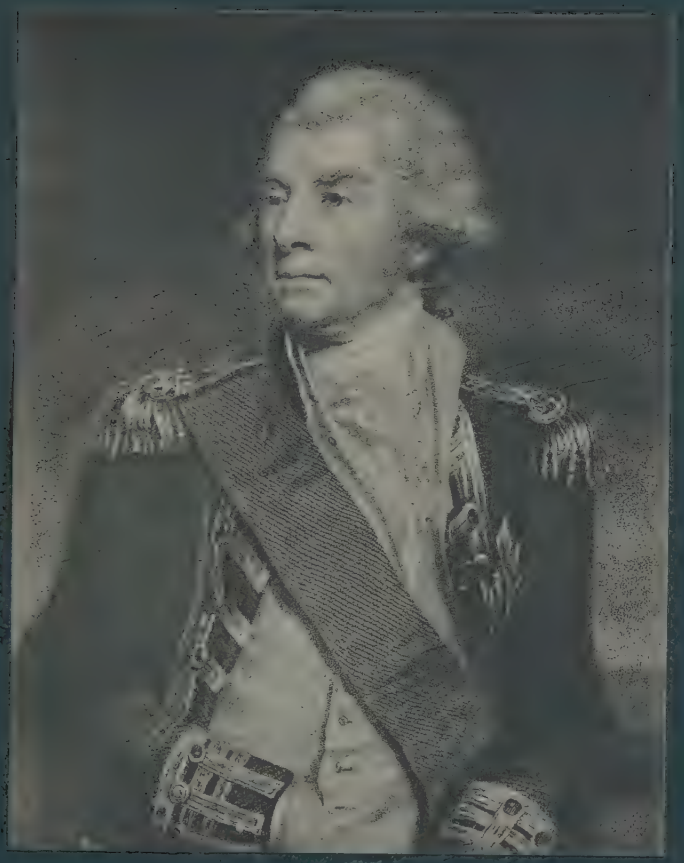
The *Thraliana* is coming to an end; so are the Thrales. The eldest is married now. Admiral Lord Keith the man; a *good* man for ought I hear: a *rich* man for ought I am told: a *brave* man we have always heard: and a *wise* man I trow by his choice. The name no new one, and excellent for a charade, *e.g.*

> A Faery my first, who to fame makes pretence;
> My second a Rock, dear Britannia's defence;
> In my third when combined will too quickly be shown
> The Faery and Rock in our brave Elphin-stone.

[1] See p. 66.

ADMIRAL LORD KEITH

After painting by
SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS



LETTERS

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS TO DANIEL AND SAMUEL LYSONS[1]

"MILAN, *26th Feb.*, 1785.

"TELL me something of home, *do*: how the people tear Mrs. Siddons[2] in pieces, and why they tear her. How the executors and Mr. Boswell quarrel over the remains of poor Dr. Johnson! I saw something of it in an English newspaper one day; but it only served to whet, not gratify, curiosity; the particulars must come from you. The booksellers have written to me for materials or letters, but I told them truly enough that I had left most of my papers in England, and could do nothing till my return."

"MILAN, *22nd March*, 1785.

"My book is getting forward, and will run well enough among the rest; the letters I have of Dr. Johnson's are two hundred at least, I dare say, and some of those from Skie are delightful—they will carry my little volume upon their back quite easily.

[1] Rev. Daniel Lysons, rector of Rodmarton, author of various works on topography. He collaborated with his brother, Samuel Lysons, F.R.S., in *Magna Brittania*, 1806–1822.

[2] This was the year of Mrs. Siddons's triumph in Lady Macbeth.

"Do you know who Dr. Taylor gives his anecdotes to?[1] Dr. Johnson bid me once ask *him* for memoirs, if I was the survivor, and so I would, but I am afraid of a refusal, as I guess Sir John Hawkins[2] is already in possession of all that Dr. Taylor has to bestow. There lives, however, at Birmingham a surgeon, Mr. Edward Hector,[3] whom, likewise, Mr. Johnson referred me to: he once saw Mr. Thrale and me, and, perhaps, would be more kind, and more likely to relate such things as I wish to hear,—could you go between us and coax him out of some intelligence?—the story of the duck is incomparable.[4] Sir Lucas Pepys[5] advised me not to declare to private friends alone, but to publicly advertise my intentions of writing anecdotes concerning Dr. Johnson: you will, therefore, see it proclaimed in all the papers, I hope.

"VENICE, 30*th April*, 1785.

"My book is in very pretty forwardness, but the letters I have in England are my best possessions.

[1] Boswell had the benefit of Dr. Taylor's information.

[2] Published *Life and Works of Johnson*, 1787–1789.

[3] See p. 238.

[4] The story that, when a child of three years old, he chanced to tread upon a duckling, the eleventh of a brood, and killed it; upon which it is said he dictated to his mother the following epitaph:—

"Here lies good master Duck,
Whom Samuel Johnson trod on,
If it had lived, it had been good luck,
For then we'd had an odd one."

Boswell, who repeats the story given by Mrs. Piozzi and Hawkins, declares that the lines were made by Johnson's father, and imputed to the child from vanity.

[5] See p. 206.

A propos, the papers said that Sir John Hawkins has had his house burnt down, is it true? Pray inquire for a letter which I *know* Dr. Johnson wrote to Mr. Barnard,[1] the King's librarian, when he was in Italy looking for curious books; the subject was wholly literary and controversial, and would be most interesting to the public; I would give anything almost to obtain a copy *now*, and there was a time when I might have taken twenty copies. Do not you be as negligent of *your* opportunities of improvement; one always repents such negligence in the end. No end to my preachments, you'll say, but you always gave me permission to preach to you, so I am at least a *licenziata*.

"Miss Thrale has written to me from Brighthelmstone, and Susan and Sophy have thanked me for a little box I sent at the same time as yours, with female trifles in it. Mr. Piozzi is so good as to send them some token of our existence and regard by every opportunity, and the Venetian resident will be good-natured and carry something, I am sure; but then he will not get to London these ten months. I hope you will all like him when he comes among you, and I rather think it, he is a man of an active mind and soft manners. What is there in this world, I wonder, unattainable by the old maxim well persisted in—of *suaviter in modo, fortiter in re?* Very few things I do think."

[1] Librarian at the Queen's House (on the site of Buckingham Palace). The letter was also lamented by Boswell (*sub anno* 1767) and was first printed by Croker.

"FLORENCE, 14*th June*, 1785.

"It was exceedingly friendly in you to tell me about the spitfire wits, and nothing can prove the regard I pay to your good counsel so completely, as the method I immediately took by writing to Mr. Cadell, and offering him the *Anecdotes*. He will probably show you my letter, perhaps publish it, in order to convince the world that 'tis no joke at all, and that they must wait till they have read, before they begin to ridicule it. Meantime, I have sent Sir Lucas Pepys[1] an ode, written by the Chevalier Pindemonte, a noble Venetian, in praise of England, with my translation over against it; so people may see I am at liberty to write something, and may undertake the Memoirs of Dr. Johnson as well as anything else. Mr. Colman[2] is right enough in his conjectures, I dare say; but those who had a true knowledge of our great man's mind will remember that he preferred veracity to interest, affection or resentment; nor suffered partiality or prejudice to warp him from the truth. Let Mr. Boswell be sure to keep that example in view; his old friend often recommended it to him. . . .

"I knew the friendship of the two brothers Pepys[1] would be exceedingly delightful to you; Lady Rothes[3] is one of the best, as well as one of the most agreeable women I know. The world was against her once, on account of her second marriage, without knowing why; but she has had the good fortune to

[1] See p. 206.
[2] George Colman, the elder (1732–1794).
[3] See p. 189.

see her choice approved at last by family friends and acquaintance, and I have no doubt but I shall enjoy the same consolation, for the same reason, because my husband deserves every day more than I could ever have done for him, had I, as *Portia* says, been 'Trebled twenty times myself.' Poor soul! he has got the gout now, and I am writing by his bedside."

"FIRENZE, 27*th July*, 1785.

"DEAR MR. LYSONS,—You deserve long letters, indeed, you are so good-natured, in writing so often and kindly. Miss Thrale does just the reverse; but I will not let anything vex me, when I have so much with which I ought to be pleased. . . . Mr. and Mrs. Greatheed[1] (whose family you cannot but know) are our constant and partial friends; they have never been three days apart since their acquaintance began, and they love one another at five years end—just as we do now, I think, who hope to follow their example for half a century at least, and then we shall be a show, like the learned pig.[2] . . .

"I have been playing the baby, and writing nonsense to divert our English friends here, who do the same thing themselves, and swear they will print the collection, and call it an Arno Miscellany.[3] Mr.

[1] See p. 52.

[2] The famous pig of which Miss Seward told Johnson (Boswell, *sub anno* 1784). Johnson said, "the pig has no cause to complain; he would have been killed the first year if he had not been *educated*."

[3] It was finally called the *Florence Miscellany*, and became the fountain-head of the Della Cruscan atrocities in verse. See p. 52.

Parsons and Mr. Merry are exceedingly clever, so is Mr. Greatheed[1] and we have no critics to maul us, so we laugh in peace. . . .

"It is difficult to express the esteem and fondness shown by the Florentines of both sexes to Mrs. Greatheed and myself, for the sincere love we bear to our amiable husbands—*che bel esempio! che care Inglesine! che copie felice!* resounds from every mouth. Oh! for candour and liberality of sentiment, for honest praise and kind construction of words and actions, Italy is the place, nor have they any idea of pretending to approve what they really do not like."

"ROME, *4th Nov.*, 1785.

"You do well to examine our land of mediocrities before you come hither, whence Mr. Piozzi says he shall be glad to return to clean rooms, neat workmanship, and good common sense.

"This last article reminds me of dear Dr. Johnson. I was very sorry, indeed, to hear of his useless prayers for the dead:[2] for, as the Prophet David says, it cost more to redeem their souls, so that we must let that alone for ever. Meantime I wish my *Anecdotes* may be found less trivial than Boswell's:[3] I always hoped that even trifles belonging to Johnson would be welcome to the public, or what would become of my

[1] See p. 52.

[2] In *Prayers and Meditations*, edited in 1785 by Rev. Dr. Strahan, Vicar of Islington.

[3] Referring to Boswell's *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides*, 1785.

book? Did the executors publish those *Prayers and Meditations*? or, how came they printed? Do tell, for I am earnest to hear.[1] . . .

"Will you have a pretty book as a present? Mr. Parsons, Mr. Greathead, Mr. Merry and myself (who had the least share), diverted ourselves with writing verses, while we lived together at Florence, and got them printed—but very imperfectly, as you may suppose; and I have sent a few copies to England, of which I beg you to accept one. You must call on Mr. Cator[2] for it: he lives in the Adelphi, you know. They made me write the preface and find the motto; but some of the verses are very good indeed, and I hope you will say so, as I think exceeding highly of Merry's poetical powers."[3]

"ROME, *March* 1, 1786.

"I regret exceedingly that we [Cornelia Knight[4]] made acquaintance only at Naples, for many reasons: we had great talk about Dr. Johnson, who was her mother's friend; her father was Captain Knight, made Sir Joseph when the King went aboard his ship at Portsmouth. Oh! you have got our little book of verses written in Tuscany safe by now; for Miss Thrale has thanked me for hers, and says she likes the preface. Write to me soon, do, and tell me all the news. Miss

[1] They were given to Dr. Strahan by Johnson in the year of his death, with a view to being prepared for publication.

[2] See p. 41.

[3] Ex pede Herculem—see *Della Crusca Verses*, p. 52.

[4] Ellis Cornelia Knight (1757–1837), companion to Queen Charlotte and Princess Charlotte. Her *Autobiography* appeared in 1861.

Brunton [1] is set up as a rival to Siddons, I hear, but sure that won't do. How droll it must be to see Mrs. Abingdon [2] act *Scrub!*" [3]

"ROME, *25th March*, 1786.

"Nothing was ever more pretty, comical, and sparkling [4] than the verses about Mr. Boswell, which you tell me are Dr. Walcot's; but, upon my honour, the world is very rigorous; for, if Boswell was Plutarch, nothing but the sayings of Johnson could he record—like 'Arabella's' maid in the *Female Quixote*,[5] we should all be at a loss to keep a register of his actions, for even her ladyship's smiles might be mentioned, as she suggests; but dear Dr. Johnson did not afford us many of them. Is Mrs. Montagu convinced of my respect, and of Mr. Boswell's flippancy? [6] I hope so."

"MILAN, *6th July*, 1786.

"Miss Nicholson's [7] never having had my letters, nor I hers, is amazing: we thought she was gone to France, and she, it seems, imagined us still at Milan."

[1] Afterwards the wife of Robert Merry, the Della Cruscan.

[2] Frances Abington (1737–1815), the actress who was the original Lady Teazle.

[3] The valet in Farquhar's *Beaux' Stratagem*.

[4] Ten years later Mrs. Piozzi stood in Peter Pindar's pillory (Bozzy and Piozzi) beside Boswell, regarding whose castigation she is here so cheerful. Peter Pindar was John Wolcot, M.D. (1738–1819), the satirist of George the Third.

[5] Charlotte Lennox's novel of 1752.

[6] This refers to the passage in the *Tour to the Hebrides* where Boswell reports Johnson as saying that Mrs. Thrale could not "get through" Mrs. Montagu's *Essay on Shakespeare*. Mrs. Piozzi made a feeble denial in her *Anecdotes*. See Boswell's *Tour*, 23rd Sept.

[7] See p. 49.

"*Holy Thursday* (1787), HANOVER SQUARE.

"DEAR MR. LYSONS,—I have found about forty letters of Johnson's in the old trunk, which may very well be printed; some of them exceedingly long ones, and of the best sort. I read two or three to Mr. Cadell, and he liked them vastly, but will not abate of mine; and for the sake of his partiality I am now resolved to be patiently tied to the stake, and if we can find six or seven tolerable ones for each volume, he shall have them, but let me look them over once again. No need to expunge with salt and lemons all the names I have crossed—let the initials stand; it is enough that I do not name them out; civility is all I owe them, and my attention not to offend is shown by the dash. The preface is written, and when I get the verses from Dr. Lort [1] I will not be dilatory, for I have a nice little writing room, and a very gentleman-like man to deal with in Mr. Cadell."

"ALFRED STREET, BATH, 17*th Nov.*, 1787.

"The authors of *The World* are vastly civil, but I have not yet been able to get a sight of the paragraph. Miss Lees are charming women,[2] and appear to deserve their very uncommon success.

"With regard to my own book,[3] if no one thinks more

[1] Michael Lort, D.D., Professor of Greek at Cambridge, Prebendary of St. Paul's, antiquary; a frequent guest at Mrs. Thrale's house.

[2] The sisters, Harriet and Sophia Lee, novelists and dramatists. They were joint authors of *Canterbury Tales*, one of which was the source of Byron's *Werner*. Sophia Lee had a school at Bath.

[3] *I.e. Letters to and from Johnson*, 1788.

about it than I have done since I saw you, woe betide Cadell! If anybody has stolen a letter of mine, they will add little to their guilt, though much to their shame by publishing it."[1]

"EXMOUTH, 23*rd August*, 1788.

"It was the heat of the summer exalted Baretti's venom so,—I am told all the vipers sting terribly this year. He'll cool with the weather, you'll see.[2]

"I wish Seward[3] and Miss Streatfield[4] would make a match of it at last; there would then be a collar of SSS."

"EDINBURGH, 8*th July*, 1789.

"I am glad the book swims, poor thing!—what does Dr. Lort[5] say of it? Yet he would have written himself, I fear, had it much pleased him."

"EDINBURGH, 21*st July* (1789), *Tuesday*.

"DEAR MR. LYSONS,—I wish Cadell had sent my money to Drummond's before he left London; but I warrant he forbore only before he left that it was too little for such a book; so means to do something handsome just at harvest season;—'and the genteel

[1] This alludes to a letter of hers to Johnson, dated Bath, April 28, 1780; afterwards published by Boswell. On the margin she has written: "This is the famous letter with which Mr. Boswell threatened us all. He bought it of Frank the Black for half a crown, to have a little teising in his power." (Hayward.)

[2] An unintentionally gruesome prophecy of Baretti's death in less than a year.

[3] See p. 68. [4] See p. 39 *et seq.* [5] See p. 257.

thing is the genteel thing at any time,' as Goldsmith's Bear-leader[1] says in the play."

"KESWICK, 21*st July*, 1789.

"Pray who is my enemy that writes in the *British Review*? You told me one enemy's name, and I forgot it again; which *Review* does he write for? or are they both the same man?"

To the Rev. Daniel Lysons

"4 *o'clock in the morning of Saturday* 16, 1794.

"DEAR MR. LYSONS,—Here are we returned home from a concert at one house, a card assembly at a second, a ball and supper at a third. The pain in my side, which has tormented me all evening, should not however have prevented my giving the girls their frolic, and enjoying your company myself; but servants and horses can't stand it *if I can*, and even Cecilia[2] consents not to be waked in four hours after she lies down. Excuse us all, therefore, and believe me ever truly yours, H. L. PIOZZI."

To the Rev. Daniel Lysons

"DENBIGH, *Sunday night*, 15*th February*, 1795.

"DEAR MR. LYSONS,—A thousand thanks for your letter, and literary intelligence. I suspect the tragedy

[1] Tony Lumpkin's friend at "The Three Jolly Pigeons."
[2] Her youngest daughter.

etc.[1] will prove a second Chattertonism; this is an age of imposture. What became of the philosopher in St. Martin's Lane, who advertised a while ago that he gave life and motion to stone figures, that moved and turned in every direction at the word of command? I never saw it in the paper but once; 'twas a curious advertisement. So is Mr. Kemble's *in another way*; he has proved himself no conjuror, sure, to get into such a scrape, but Alexander and Statira will pull him out, I suppose.[2] Poor dear Mrs. Siddons is never well long together, always *some* torment, body or mind, or both. Are people only *sick* in London (by the way), or do they *die*? not of any one contagious disorder, but of various maladies. I suspect there is disposition to mortality in the town, sure enough, for never did I read of so many deaths together; these violent changes from cold to heat, and from heat to cold, occasion a great deal of it.

"For the Princess of Wales, I think little about her just now, and still less about that horrid Mr. Brothers,[3] but it will be a dreadful thing to see the King and Queen of Spain setting out upon *their* travels, as appears by no means improbable, if the French are in possession of Pampeluna. The Spaniards can fight nothing but

[1] W. H. Ireland's forged tragedy of *Vortigern*. It was actually produced the following year by Sheridan and Kemble at Drury Lane, but the audience diagnosed it as a "solemn mockery."

[2] He was obliged to make a public apology for indecorous behaviour to a lady [Maria Theresa De Camp] who afterwards became his sister-in-law [wife of Charles Kemble]. (Hayward).

[3] Richard Brothers said he was descended from David, and demanded the homage of George the Third. He died in 1824, after spending many years in an asylum and writing some weird books of prophecy.

bulls; we shall have that royal family unroosted, I verily believe, and in a few months too. The capture of Holland will seem a light thing in comparison of so heavy a calamity when it comes to pass, for all the riches of Mexico will then drop into the wrong scale.

> "'But we will not be over-exquisite
> To scan the fashion of uncertain evils,'

as Milton says; but keep out famine by liberality, and contagion by cleanliness, as long as ever we can; loving our gallant seamen meantime, and rewarding them with all the honours and profits old England has to bestow.

"I should like to read your Fast sermon; we shall have a very good one *here*, for among other comforts Denbigh possesses that of an excellent preacher and reader. Pray tell how the day is observed in London and its environs: I shall be curious to hear; and do assure you with the greatest sincerity that letters from you and your brother are most desirable treats. He is cruel, though, and keeps close *Mum*. Pray are the Greatheeds [1] in town? what do they say of Mr. Kemble's conduct? and what of their countryman Shakespeare's extraordinary resuscitation? [2] It seems to me a sort of tub to the whale, a thing to catch attention, and detain it from other matters. When we see Mr. Lloyd of Wickwor, whom we here justly call the philosopher, I shall find what *he* thinks of the discovery. Give my kindest regards to your very amiable neighbours, Miss Pettiwards; they must take *double* caré of their mother now, if possible, for all the people past a certain age seem to be dropping off.

[1] See p. 52.

[2] The Ireland forgeries.

"'Tis very wicked in me to send you these sixpenny-worths of interrogations every time I feel my ignorance of what passes in the world painful to myself, or disgraceful among those whom I wish to entertain; but whoever is rich will be borrowed from: so Adieu! and write soon, and accept my master's [1] and Cecilia's best compliments from, dear Sir, yours most faithfully,

"H. L. Piozzi."

To the Rev. Daniel Lysons

"Brynbella, *9th February*, 1796.

"You really can scarcely believe, dear Mr. Lysons, how much entertainment and pleasure was given us by your agreeable and friendly letter, in which however you do not mention your brother, but I doubt not he is well and happy. You do not mention the high price of provisions neither, though sufficient to make everybody *un*happy; but this mild season, and good plenty of coals, I trust, contribute to keep people quiet, assisted by our new laws against sedition.[2] I have found a wise book at last—Miss Thrale sent it me—on Monopoly and Reform of Manners; printed for Faulder. It should be given about, I think, like Hannah More's penny books, and got by heart for a task by servants, apprentices, etc., and much finer people, though *they* are too fine by half.

[1] This was the designation by which Mrs. Piozzi styled both her husbands. The Johnsonian circle spoke of Mr. Thrale as "The Master."

[2] A characteristically unintentional stroke of irony. Mrs. Piozzi is never more humorous than when she least designs it.

"The Chinese embassy[1] will not tempt three guineas out of my pocket, say *what* they will, and say it *how* they will. Æneas Anderson has convinced me that it was an empty business at best.

"Your account of Shakespear's being forged and fooled after so many years' peace and quietness most exactly tallies with what my heart told me upon reading the queen's supposed letter to him in our newspaper. I have seen no other, but was struck with the word *amuse*. She would have said *pastyme*. The other phrase was hardly received in France (whence we got it) so early as the days of Elizabeth. The dates, however, are decisive, when you tell me she is made to promote the *amuse*ment of a man then known to be dead. The Earl of Leicester was ranger here of Denbigh Green, you know; and my ancestor, Salusbury of Bachygraig, opposed his innovation when he sought to enclose the common for his use. The tyrant followed him up, though, till he got his life; and not contented with that, brought his first cousin, Salusbury of Llewenney,—my *mother's* ancestor,—to death likewise, by way of revenge; all which shall serve as my pretext for a good piece of the Green whenever it is ordered for cultivation. Meantime, let me request an early narrative of Vortigern's success. I think they will pluck his painted vest from him,[2] but we shall see.

[1] Lord Macartney's embassy of 1792–94. The Earl's own account appeared first in his memoir by Sir John Barrow, 1807.

[2] "A painted vest Prince Vortigern had on,
Which from a naked Pict his grandsire won."

The play was damned from the first, and Ireland fully exposed by Malone.

"It has been long matter of surprise to me that the less-instructed part of our common audiences in London never miss being right in their judgment of a play, or even of the language; for as to incidents, those are as obvious to one set of men as to another, if probable or not. But what I mean is this: when Lady Macbeth tells them that the grooms of Duncan's chamber she will with wine and wassail so *convince*, etc., they think it (as it certainly is) perfectly right, and in character with the times; but let Cumberland or Jephson use the same phrase, and say they will *convince* a knot of friends with *drink*, a loud shout of laughter would, without any instigation, burst from the upper gallery; every single member of which, talked to apart, would appear to know very little, if anything, concerning the history of their native tongue. For these reasons it is scarce a fair wager how this new tragedy is received, without they bring it out in Shakspear's name, which I do think would save it harmless, so long as they believed the imposition.

"Meantime, I see by the newspapers people continue to insult the king, throwing stones at him as he passes. Methinks the very word *stone* should be offensive to all his family[1]: one mad fool of the name persecuted Princess Sophia, as I remember, with offers of marriage; and this coachmaker or coal-merchant, or what was the anagrammatical gentleman who signed *Enots, he* seems to have escaped by testimonials to his character from the rich Democrates. I think they are all Gall *Stones*, and I heartily wish we were rid of them.

[1] See p. 272.

ANNA SEWARD

After painting by
SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS

Chapman, sculp.

"What becomes of the Beavor family? I never write to Mrs. Gillies, because I know she hates letters; but my true esteem of her brave brothers does not lessen by absence. Mrs. D'Arblaye's new novel[1] is not advertised yet. Somebody told me Lady Eglinton is turned writer now she has married the son of Doctor More; but perhaps it was a joke. Will Miss Farren's[2] coronet *never* be put on? I thought the paralytic countess would have made way for her long ago.

"Dear, charming Siddons keeps her empire over all hearts still, I hope; if an Irish plan takes place in her arrangements this spring, we shall not despair to see her at Brynbella. Tell her so with my true love.

"There is a new pamphlet supposed by Jones, the Hutchinsonian,[3] to say that our Saviour's Coming (but not the end of the world) is at hand. I cannot recollect the title of it, but do buy and send it to Streatham Park with any other *little* thing worth notice, but no three-guinea books. I wonder who wrote the small tract about Monopoly; 'tis monstrously clever, and clever *only* because *it's true*. So is my conclusion of this letter, saying that I am most sincerely, dear Sir, yours, H. L. PIOZZI.

"My master unites in compliments."

[1] *Camilla.*

[2] Elizabeth Farren married the Earl of Derby in the following year.

[3] Follower of John Hutchinson, the religious symbolist (1674–1737). He opposed Newton in his *Moses' Principia.*

To the Rev. Daniel Lysons

"BRYNBELLA, *9th July*, 1796.

"DEAR MR. LYSONS,—This is a letter of mere request, to beg remembrances from old and distant friends. Do pray write now and then, and make me up a good long letter of *small London chat*: you can scarcely think how welcome *living* intelligence is to those who have chiefly the *dead* to converse with, and I work hard at *old* stuff all morning, and sigh for some *evening* conversation about literature and politics, and the common occurrences of the day.

"*Esher* or *Asher*, in Surrey, is a place I cannot find in your Environs.[1] It was my grandmother's property, and she sold it to the Pelhams; *her* mother lies buried there with a painted or coloured monument if I recollect rightly, though 'tis many years since I saw it. Mr. Piozzi used to promise me a drive thither, but we never went.

"Hume says that Cardinal Wolsey retired to that seat[2] when the king withdrew his favour from him; and Mr. Fitzmaurice, from whose library I borrowed the book, queries the place, and doubts whether he ever was there; although Stowe tells—for I remember it—how Wolsey alighted from his horse in the road between Asher and Richmond to receive the ring which Henry sent him, and threw himself on his knees in the dirt from thankfulness that he was not *wholly* out of favour. I wish you would set me right. Like-

[1] *Environs of London*, by Daniel Lysons, 1792–1796.

[2] In 1529 Wolsey had to leave his palace at York and reside at Esher, near Hampton Court.

wise I want to know where the spot once called Castle-risings now stands. Edward II.'s queen Isabella was confined there to her death, but lived very grand, I trust, for she had 3000*l.* a year, a sum equal to a royal jointure *now*, I suppose. Hume says it *was* ten miles from London, and it must be nearer *now*.

"Do Mr. Walpole's works sell, and is his *Love Story* that you once read to me in them? I liked the letters to Hannah More mightily.

"If Mr. Bunbury's *Little Gray Man* is printed, do send it hither; the ladies at Llangollen are dying for it. They like those old Scandinavian tales and the imitations of them exceedingly; and tell me about the prince and princess of *this* loyal country, one province of which alone had disgraced itself; and now no Anglesey militiaman is spoken to by the *Cymrodorion*, but all completely sent to *Coventry*, for nobody wants them in Ireland.

"The mysterious expedition of Buonaparte will I hope end at worst in revolutionising the Greek Islands, and restoring the old names to Peloponnæsus, Eubœa, etc. I should be sorry he ever got to India, but waking the Turks from their long sleep will not grieve me. The Knights of Malta make a *triste figure* at last; I suppose Mr. Weishoupt's emissaries were beforehand with the *hero of Italy*, as they call him.

"My husband is particularly disgusted with the people that exalt Buonaparte's personal courage and valorous deeds. 'He goes nowhere unless he is called,' says Mr. Piozzi; if he wanted to show his *prowess*, why did not he *come here*, or to Ireland? we would have shown him sport; but like Caliban, those

fellows *will be wise henceforward and sue for grace*, and worship the French no more, unless they are still greater blunderers than even *I* take them for."

To the Rev. Daniel Lysons

"BRYNBELLA, *5th Jan.*, 1796.

"DEAR MR. LYSONS,—After making repeated inquiries for you of all our common friends, I begin to find out that the best way is to ask yourself. Dear Siddons was always a slow correspondent, though a kind wellwisher; and she has so much to do in good earnest, that we must forgive her not sitting down to write letters either of fact or sentiment; for a little of both these I apply to *you*, and beg a little chat for information of what is going forward. Tell me, in the first place, concerning your own health and your *wicked* brother's, who forgets his old correspondent very shamefully; after that, let the sedition bills or the Shakespear manuscripts take post according to the bustle made about them in London. Make me understand why Mr. Hayley writes Milton's life, and why Doctor Anderson[1] publishes Johnson's. Those roads are so beaten they will get dust in their own eyes sure, instead of throwing any into the eyes of their readers; at this distance from the scene of action I cannot guess their intents. Tell what other new books attract notice, and what becomes of the Whig Club now 'tis divided like Paris into *sections*. I fancy France will be divided into sections at last,—a bit to Royalists, another bit to

[1] Robert Anderson, M.D., editor and biographer of *British Poets* (1792–1795).

Republicans; and perhaps the very name of a nation so disgraced by crimes and follies will be lost for ever. No matter! I long to see Burke's letter to Arthur Young: *his* predictions have the best claim to attention of any living wight.

"Oh pray what becomes of the man[1] who set mankind a staring this time last year? he is in a madhouse, is not he? We had a slight earthquake about eight or ten weeks ago, and such extraordinary weather as never did I witness; very providential sure that it should continue so warm and mild and open while bread remains at such an advanced price. Yesterday the prospect was clear and bright as spring; nor have we seen ice hitherto; but storms enough to blow the very house down, and I fear prevent our West India fleet from ever arriving at its place of destination. A beautiful prismatic halo round the moon in an elliptic form very elegant on Christmas Day, was said by our rural philosophers to be a rare but certain præcursor of tempest, and so it proved: I was, however, glad to have seen a meteor so uncommon.

"Has your brother examined any of the gold from our new mine in Ireland? The Bishop showed us some, and Mr. Lloyd, I think, sent specimens to Sir Joseph Banks[2]—it is supposed purer, and less drugged with alloy than what comes immediately from Peru—could we but get enough of it.

[1] Richard Brothers. See p. 260.
[2] President of the Royal Society.

To the Rev. Daniel Lysons

"BRYNBELLA, *Thursday.*

"DEAR MR. LYSONS,—Accept a renewal of inquiries, literary and domestic; but 'tis for yourself I inquire; your brother, we know, is well and busy with his subterranean discoveries. What statues has he found? they will be very valuable; and tell me for mercy's sake what this *Apology for the Bible*[1] means: we live in fine times sure when the Bible wants an apology from the Bishops. How is Mr. Burke's book[2] received? and what will his regicide peace be?[3] I see no signs of peace except in the books: for they make them ready to battle in all parts of the world, and we shall have the Turks upon us directly if we chase French ships into their very harbours so. No matter! my half-crown for Flo shall be willingly contributed, though I do think *seriously* that the Dog Tax and Repeal of Game Laws will have an exceeding bad effect on the country, where gentlemen will want inducements to remain when hunting and coursing and shooting are at an end. Horses will lower in price, however, and little oats will be sown at all. I think democracy in all her insidiousness could not have contrived a more certain principle of levelling, and republicanism in all her pride could not plan more perfect gratification than that of seeing the young farmers' sons cocking their guns in face of a landlord upon whom no man feeling any dependence, he will

[1] By Richard Watson, Bishop of Llandaff, 1796.
[2] *Letter to a Noble Lord.*
[3] *Letters on a Regicide Peace*, 1797.

shelter himself among the crowds of London, and prefer being jostled at Vauxhall by his taylor, to the being robbed of innocent amusements by those who were bred on his land, and fed on his bounty.[1]

"Our Chester paper even now reproaches the rich with their donations of bread and meat, which are already styled *insults* on the *poor's independence*; and Mr. Chappelow, who has been here on a visit, protested he was glad to get *alive* out of Norfolk, because he had presumed to *give* his parishioners barley and potatoe bread baked in his own oven. I wish you would write me a long letter, and tell me a great deal about the living world; and something of the *dead* too, for I see Mr. Howard's epitaph, but cannot guess who wrote it.

"Vortigern[2] will, I trust, be condemned almost without a hearing, so completely does the laugh go against it. This is the age of forgeries. I never read of so many *causes célèbres* in that way as of late; but poor dear Mrs. Siddons saves Ireland awhile, I suppose, by her ill health, and keeps Miss Lee from fame and fortune which she expects to acquire by *Almeyda*.[3] Does Madame D'Arblay's novel promise well? Fanny wrote better before she was married than since, however that came about. I understand nothing concerning the young baronet that lost so much at back-

[1] If indignation makes verses, it does not supply syntax; and this sentence, which I have not attempted to correct, bears a strong resemblance to that of the county member who described Sir Robert Peel as "not the sort of man that you could put salt upon his tail." (Hayward.)

[2] See p. 263.

[3] A tragedy by Sophia Lee, 1796.

gammon. Those tales are seldom true to the extent they are related: much like the stories of mad dogs, which chiefly exist in newspapers; but I fear Lady Westmeath's Divorce Bill, like Mrs. Mullins, will carry conviction of *her* infidelity all over the world. We knew her and her lord at Bath very well. I try every time I write to get some intelligence of the Beavor family, but without effect.

"Selden says marriage is the act of a man's life which least concerns his acquaintance, yet, adds he, 'tis the very act of his life which they most busy themselves about. Now, Heaven knows, I never did disturb myself or him by Dr. Gillies's marriage, though it affected me exceedingly; his amiable lady and her family being of my most favourite acquaintance, and they are all lost to me somehow. Mr. Rogers' name has crost me but once since we left London either: it was when he gave evidence in favour of that *anagrammatic* Mr. Stone,[1] who wrote his name backwards, as witches are said to do; who deal in deeds of darkness, and sing

"'When good kings bleed we rejoice,' etc.

"How does your book of fashionable *dresses* go on? it must, I think, receive some curious additions by what one hears and *sees*; for a caricature print of a famous fine lady who leads the Mode has already reached poor little Denbigh."

[1] On Stone's trial, the author of *The Pleasures of Memory* proved a conversation with him in the streets, tending to show that he made no mystery of that which was charged as treasonable. (Hayward.) See p. 264.

To the Rev. Daniel Lysons

"BRYNBELLA, *Sunday*,
(post-mark, 1796.)

"DEAR MR. LYSONS,—You have at last written me so kind and so entertaining a letter, that no paper on my part shall be wasted in reproaches; I thank you very kindly, but you should never suppose me informed of things which *you* cannot help hearing; but they escape *me* easily enough. I *do* hear of the Arch Duke's successes however, and of poor Italy's disgrace; I *hear* of peace too—when shall we *see* it? Mr. Ireland is a pleasant gentleman indeed, and his last act his *best* act in my mind; absolution follows confession;[1] I have done being angry with him now. There is a note in Mr. Malone's pamphlet for which I would give half a dozen publications of fifty pages each *concerning the times*; it contains my sentiments so exactly that I may easily commend the writer's good sense and sound judgment. The mysteries of Carlton House surpass those of Udolpho:[2] may they end as those do, in mere nihility. I will not quarrel with you for making no reply to my questions about *Camilla*, because I have read it myself, and because these are really no times for any man of the living world to waste his moments in weighing of feathers; he, however, who neglects to read Burke's last pamphlet, loses much of a very rational pleasure.

[1] After being exposed by Malone, Ireland confessed his forgeries in his *Authentic Accounts*, etc., 1796.

[2] Mrs. Radcliffe's *Mysteries of Udolpho*, 1794.

I turn the page to talk of yours and your brother's discoveries,[1] of which I honestly wish you much joy."

To the Rev. Daniel Lysons

"BRYNBELLA, *Tuesday Evening*, 1797.

"Could you, as you walk about and examine books upon stalls, find me a second or third, or *thirteenth*-hand History of Poetry, by Warton, or of Music, by Hawkins;[2] I should be much obliged to you; but it must be under a guinea price. I have the good editions myself at Streatham Park. Your book of *Ladies' Dresses* must have received curious addition, by what I see and hear of the present fashions; but cutting off hair is the foolishest among the foolish. When they are tired of going without clothes, 'tis easy putting them on again; but what they will do for the poor cropt and shorn heads, now there are no convents, I cannot guess.

"Do people rejoice now wheat falls in price? they made heavy lament when it was high,—or do we only sigh for peace that we may be at leisure to meditate mischief?

"And so I see that both Ministry and Opposition have at last *agreed* in *one* point; they join against the *Lapdogs*:

> "'So when two *dogs* are fighting in the streets,
> With a third *dog* one of these two *dogs* meets;
> With angry teeth he bites him to the bone,
> And this *dog* smarts for what that *dog* had done.'

[1] On which was based Samuel Lysons's chief work, *Reliquiae Britannico-Romanae*, 1801–17.

[2] *General History of Music*, 1776, by Sir John Hawkins, Johnson's biographer, and member of the Literary Club.

These verses are somewhat too *soft* and *mellifluous* for the occasion, being Fielding's,[1] but I half long to address a doggrell epistle to Mr. Dent;[2] he would be as angry as Mr. Parsons,[3] no doubt, and I understand *his* wrath is very great. What becomes of Ireland, I wonder, now *his solemn mockery is ended.* It was a forged bill, you see, and the public did well to protest it.[4]

"If Mrs. Siddons was to work at Drury Lane all winter and run about all summer, she would have had no enjoyment of Putney; and the young ones, for whose sake she is to work and run, would never have delighted in an *out of town* residence. Cecilia[5] is coming to the scene of action, London, where *I* think there were enough just such half-hatched chickens without her and Mr. Mostyn adding to the number; but then they do not care what I think, so 'tis all one. The Bishop of Bangor likes Wales no better than she does, I suppose, but he ought not to have said so; because an old bishop should be wiser than a pretty wench, and much will be endured from *her*, very little from *him*, especially in these days; he is got into a cruel embarrassment.

"Tell something about our Princess of Wales and

[1] From *Tom Thumb the Great.*

[2] Who gained the nickname of Dog Dent by the piece of legislation in question. (Hayward.)

[3] See p. 52.

[4] *Vortigern* was acted and damned on April 2, 1796. The last audible line was

"And when this solemn mockery is o'er,"

which Kemble was accused of uttering in a manner to precipitate the catastrophe. (Hayward.)

[5] Mrs. Mostyn, the youngest daughter of Mr. Thrale.

her domestiques, and of our infant queen-expectant, pretty creature! I should somehow like to see that baby[1] excessively. My hope is that every English heart will devote itself to the service of so much innocence and sweetness.

"I depend upon an excellent account of *Almeyda*;[2] the epilogue is charming. Only one fault; 'tis an epilogue would do for any play. I call such things verses *to be let.* Prologues and epilogues should, to be perfect, be appropriate, referring to what has been presented, or is to present itself before the audience. This, however, is playful and pretty, and so far as I know or can remember, quite original.

"Adieu, dear Sir, and bid your brother not quite forget me. The arm of an old vestal virgin kept under ground since Agricola's time is cold compared with the hand of his and your faithful servant,

"H. L. Piozzi."

To Samuel Lysons, Esq.

"*Wednesday*, 10*th Feb.*, 1808.

"Dear Mr. Lysons,—I have not written to you a long time, and now I cannot *help* writing. I loved your brother so much, and wished him happy so sincerely, his change of life affects me, and my feelings will not permit me to tell *him* so. Tell him yourself, my good friend, and assure yourself that the account of his wife's death in the papers gave me a sensation

[1] Princess Charlotte Augusta (1796–1817), only child of George IV. and Caroline of Brunswick.

[2] See p. 271.

beyond what my acquaintance with her called for. But she was pretty when we last met, and she was young, and it seems so odd and melancholy to look in the grave for those one used to see at the tea-table! Well! you who live among the records of past life will bear these things better; my spirits are much depressed by Mr. Piozzi's miserable state of health, nor can the gaieties I hear of draw my attention from the sorrows that I *see*. Mrs. Mostyn[1] has politely taken a week's share of them just now while her sons are absent, and the London winter not begun. *Our* winter commenced in November, and when it will end I know not. The mountains are still covered with snow, and such tempestuous weather did I never witness.

"The political wonders have increased since the suspension of our correspondence so much, that we are all tired of wondering at them; but this new discovery of a nest of Christians in Travancore must be considered as curious by everybody who reads of it. Tell me the price of Buchanan's book[2] and its character; I see nothing but extracts, and those imperfect ones; and tell me some literary chat, remembering our distance from all possibility of adding a new idea to our stock, except by the voluntary subscriptions and contributions (to use an hospital phrase) of the nobility, gentry, and others. Hospital phrases, indeed, best suit the dwellers at Brynbella: but Doctor Johnson—never wrong—was right, *pre-eminently* right in this:

[1] See p. 275.

[2] Account of his travels by Claudius Buchanan, a teacher in India. He returned to England in the year of this letter.

That chronic diseases are never cured: and acute ones, if recovered from, cure themselves. The maxim has been confirmed by my experience every day since to me first pronounced, and I dare say the late unfortunate event in your own family affords it no contradiction.

"Has your brother many children left him by his lady, and is he living at Hempstead Court? He had better get to London, and lose his cares in the crowd.

"Dear Mr. Lysons, do write to me, and in the meantime pity me and my poor husband, whose sufferings one should believe, on a cursory view of them, wholly insupportable; but God gives the courage, with the necessity of exerting it.

"I hear all good of Mrs. Siddons."

To Samuel Lysons, Esq.

"BRYNBELLA, 22*nd Aug.*, 1813.

"Mrs. Piozzi presents her most respectful compliments to her old friend Mr. Lysons, as Governor of the British Institution, with an earnest request that he will protect her portraits from being copied, as she was strictly promised before she could consent to lend them. It would break *her* heart, and ruin the value of the pictures to posterity, and now some artist living at No. 50, Rathbone Place, who spells his name so that she cannot read it, unless 'tis Joseph, writes to her, begging he may copy the portrait of Dr. Johnson, when she was hoping all the four were by this time restored to their places at old Streatham Park. Mrs. Piozzi wishes Mr. Lysons joy of his brother's marriage,

but hopes he himself is not now at Hempstead Hall, as she knows not where to apply."

To Samuel Lysons, Esq.

"BRYNBELLA, *17th Feb.*, 1814.

"DEAR MR. LYSONS,—I was desired by some disputants to obtain correct information, and felt immediately that I could be sure of it from none but yourself. The question is, What authority can be produced, for an account given in some public print, of a frost on the River Thames, equal or nearly equal to this last, in the second or third centuries? Do me the very great kindness to let me know; and *where* you read the fact, whether in Holinshed, Stowe, Speed, or Strype's Annals, and from what record the incident is taken, it having been averred that no records could then have been kept. I mean in 260 or 270 A.D. . . .

"My correspondents always begin their letters with, You have *heard so much* of, etc., etc., that I am precluded hearing *at all.* Come now, do send me a kind letter, and tell me if Madame D'Arblaye gets 3000*l.* for her book or no,[1] and if Lord Byron is to be called over about some verses[2] he has written, as the papers hint. And tell me how the peacemakers will accommodate the Pope, and the little King of Rome too; and the Emperor of Germany beside, whose second title was King of the Romans, and how all this and ten times more is to be settled, before St. David's Day.

[1] *The Wanderer* (1814).

[2] The verses beginning:

"Weep, daughter of a royal line." (Hayward.)

Wonders! wonders! wonders! Why Katterfelto[1] and his cat never pretended to *such* impossibilities. What says your brother to *these* days? He used to feel amazed at the occurrences of twenty-one years ago; but if everything we saw so tumbled about *then*, can be so easily and swiftly arranged *now*, much of our horror and surprise might have been saved.

"The fire at the Custom House must have been very dreadful; I hope you suffered nothing but sorrow for the general loss. Devonshire Square is a place, the situation of which is unknown to me, but I have friends there, who I should grieve for, if they came to any harm.

"Adieu, dear Mr. Lysons: if I *live*, which no other old goose does I think through this winter, we shall meet at old Streatham Park,[2] and I shall once more tell you truly, and tell you *personally*, how faithfully I am yours."

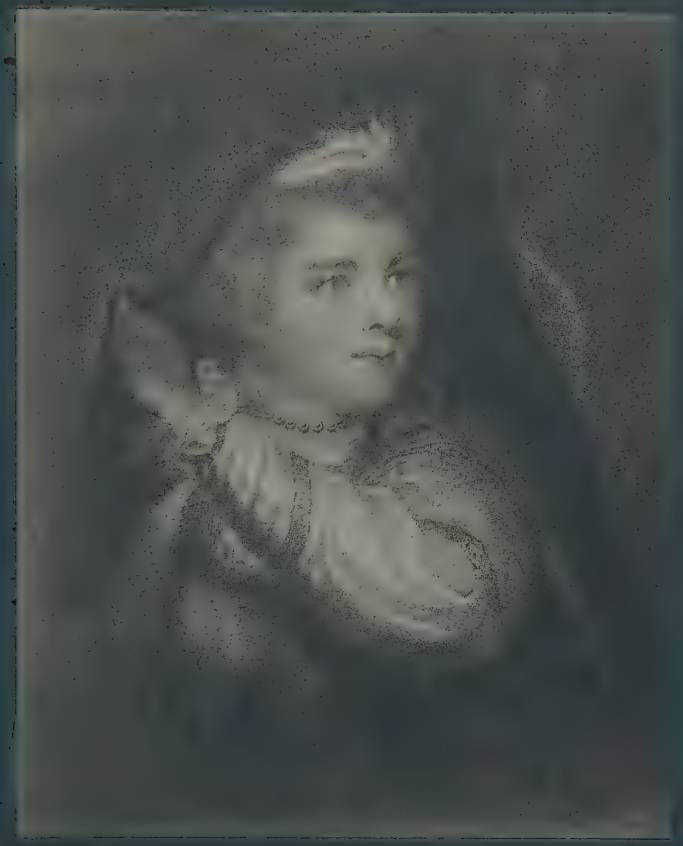
[1] A conjuror and quack doctor who performed in London in the eighties.

> "And Katerfelto with his hair on end,
> At his own wonders, wondering for his bread."
> COWPER, *The Winter Evening*.

[2] Mrs. Piozzi gave up Brynbella to Sir John Salusbury in 1814. She occasionally visited Streatham but lived chiefly at Bath and Clifton.

MRS. ABINGTON

After painting by
SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS



EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS TO DR. GRAY[1]

"BRYNBELLA, 14*th Oct.*, 1798.

"THERE is no chance of our seeing London this next spring; so if we take the whole French navy, and if in consequence they beg for peace,—or if, enraged with their worthless Directory, all the 700,000 men in arms come home under command of some Oliver Cromwell or some General Monk, and make a new revolution at Paris,—the taxes may some of them be taken off, and we may all meet merrily, at least cheerfully, at Bath *this year* . . . without fear of fresh assessments. Meanwhile, tho' all this is far more feasible and far more probable than many a strange event we have witnessed, I must apprehend it is no better than a *bounce*.

"The odious Œgyptians, after worshipping *crocodiles* so long, will perhaps worship Buonaparte, whose manifesto seems to have come out of one of their mouths; nor does your kind consolation, though I rely with firmness on its truth, take the desired effect.

"Surely those *are* the basest of nations who accept the yoke of French democracy. Surely so trodden

[1] Dr. Robert Gray, Bishop of Bristol from 1827 till his death in 1834.

down as *that*, they never will hope to raise their hopes again. How the wild scheme will end, how much the slavish French will bear from their five tyrants, who came completely from *nothing* and must return to *nothing* back again, I guess not, but am charmed with the strong contrast between Nelson's pious letter and their vile agent's blasphemous proclamation. I hear our warrior's father is a clergyman . . . how must his and Lady Nelson's hearts leap for joy!

"Have you seen the death of a charming girl in the papers, whose long and severe sufferings interest all her friends, and have half broken her sweet mother's heart! Maria Siddons! more lamented, I do think, than virtue, value, and science all combined would be. But she had youthful beauty; and to that quality our fond imaginations never fail to affix softness of temper and a gentle spirit, every charm resident in female minds. You are very happy, however, my dear Sir, as fine things as we ladies are, to have *two* boys for purpose of protecting your *one* girl. Brothers are a vast advantage to young women, and save them from a thousand embarrassments when they would not permit (in these illuminated days) a parent's hand to be of any use to them.

"I am ashamed. 'Tis this moment struck into my head that by dear Nelson's pious ancestor you mean the admirable writer of the Feasts and Fasts.[1] I had no notion they were any way related, but reading over your kind letter again 'tis plain it *must* be so.

"You will think me as stupid as Lord Carlisle's cook, who begged permission to examine the library

[1] *Festivals and Fasts*, by Robert Nelson, 1704.

one day, because, says he, I have been told when a child about Nelson's feasts and fasts . . . and 'tis time to read it in earnest, and fix upon some *good receipts*. This is a fact."

"STREATHAM, *Wednesday*, 1800.

"Did you drink one good-humour'd glass extraordinary to the health of *Retrospection*,[1] which will come to light in about a month after your *own* child, and claim some of your superfluous kindness? I hope you did. If it ever should be in the path of those amiable friends you introduced me to at Oxford, they will give it a kick *forward* and drive it along for *your* sake. Stockdale[2] is a good *hoper*, and seems to think well of it upon the *launch*. He is a good aristocrat, too; I am pleas'd that it comes out from his loyal shop.[3] We are living here among the wealthy traders,—*merchants like princes* in the strictest sense,—of liberality as of revenue. *One* says how his neighbour such a one has 30,000*l*., the other 60,000*l*. a year, and I accordingly do see improvements taking place all about London, which entered not into my thoughts a dozen years ago.

"The library *here*, for example, at old Streatham Park has been enriched with new and expensive publications till it looks like Edwards's[4] showy shop

[1] See p. 2.

[2] John Stockdale, publisher (*d.* 1814). He issued Johnson's Works in 1787.

[3] He began his career as porter to John Almon, the bookseller friend of Wilkes.

[4] James Edwards, a celebrated bookseller (1757–1816), who bought the Pinelli library at Venice, and other rare collections.

in Pall Mall. Our tenant [1] asked leave to purchase some *modern* books as he called them, with permission to displace the old *divines* which you remember standing at the bottom of the room; and so he has indeed! nor has that generous creature spent less than a thousand guineas in literary amusement since he lived here. Meanwhile some frightful hand-bills are in circulation, expressing a dependence upon Parliament for that relief which I doubt they have no power to bestow.

"As far as my short sight extends, however, insurrection is completely left without excuse, while such enormous alms are given round this parish as would amaze a native of any kingdom but ours. Whilst they dispense charity with one hand besides, I find them active to defend their property on the other: and if they persist in their present resolution of not being plunder'd, I do think the agitators of evil will see some difficulty in persuading a mob to injure houses whence the poor are so fed, so clothed, so comforted . . . and in each of which arms are kept to protect those possessions which every man seems trying to deserve.

"We were calculating three nights ago that less than one million of pounds sterling was not given away last year in private bounties, besides Poor's Revenues amounting to five times that sum. I question if Sardinia's king ever could boast such a treasure in his coffers. Bread is at eighteen pence the quartern loaf this day, however, and the new Lord Mayor will have a troublesome time of it."

[1] Lord Shelburne.

"*Wednesday, 7th Jan.*, 1801.

"For my own part the world has used me to indulgence, so that I feel quite astonished when I meet a little severity.[1]

"There has been *very* little yet. One gentleman, in his care for my reputation as to scholarship, sent a friend across the town yesterday to tell me that the quotation in vol. 1st. p. 381 was *quite wrong*, because *Anna*, not *Acca*, was the woman's name there called upon. It was almost painful to me to tell *him* that, tho' Dido's sister (like the lady's sister in Bluebeard) was *Anna*, Camilla's companion in fight was Acca, and called sister only from tenderness. Almost *every* Latin quotation and many French ones are wrong printed. . . . Mr. Gillet's rebellion among his compositors was a terrible stroke on poor Stockdale[2] and myself, and I was forced to rout out my dirty manuscript an hour ago to convince a Roman Catholic critick that it was not *my* fault but the *devil's*, that their hymn to St. John was so mangled, 1st vol. p. 251. He made no complaint of any *mistake* in page 304, the same volume.

"Dear Mr. Gray, say a good word of the book in general, and let us get out of print, and set forth a more correct edition; and let us never flatter ourselves hereafter that a clean handwriting is any security against typographical errors."

"Brynbella, *13th May*, 1801.

"I have been *canvassing* Miss Thrales these years, and their votes have a *Q* before them yet. People

[1] Regarding *Retrospection*. [2] See p. 283.

skilled in electioneering know *that* letter stands for *Query* . . . the steady suffrages have a *P* for *Promise.* I used to tell the borough folks who kept our books, they must *mind their p's and q's.* So must Buonaparte, if he comes hither on call of our home Jacobins. The wisest people I converse with say he *must* come, or expose himself to danger from vindictive Frenchmen. Things are supposed ripening for revolt in that distracted nation, whence religion and morals are more completely banish'd—as foreigners have told me—than any living creature in our comparatively quiet land can have a notion.

"The Bishop is just now wholly inaccessible to me indeed, though I did squeeze this frank out of him; because Mr. Chester, one of his nephews, is killed in Egypt, and Mr. Piozzi is in bed with the gout, so that I cannot go and condole . . . but no opportunity shall be lost.

"I printed Hannah More's *Village Politics* here, and paid near twelve guineas out of my own pocket-money for its translation and dispersion;[1] but when the good news came and welcomed in this lovely month, the master of our house prevented my wishes, and, forbearing silly expense as to candles, gave all his labourers and cottagers a good mess of soup,—a bit of beef in it, and a dumpling,—exactly on your principle of affording them reason

[1] *Village Politics* was issued by Hannah More in 1792. It was a tract in dialogue to counteract revolutionary doctrine. Mrs. Piozzi's liberality seems not to have been unique. Hannah More's biographer says "numerous patriotic persons printed large editions of it at their own expense."

to rejoyce, and a pretext for roaring out 'God save the King!'"

"BRYNBELLA, *2nd Dec.*, 1801.

"*My* learning, that the people laugh at so much more justly than they *think* they do, comes chiefly from the Spectators and Tattlers, but is not sufficient to inform me what was meant a hundred years ago in common colloquial chat by *vowell*ing a man. Some of those charming papers has this phrase: 'Such a one, says he, has been *vowell*'d by the Count, and resolves to demand satisfaction.'

"I should like to know what it means. Was there a *quibble* intended? Had some fine fellow lost money at play to some other fine fellow, and was he forced to say I O U? When we were at Vienna our cicerone showed us these letters over the Arsenal, and asked all the gentlemen in our party if we could explain them: A. E. I. O. U. After everybody had confessed ignorance, he said 'Austriacorum Est Imperare Orbi Universo,' was the device intended, and I remember some of the company,—a Frenchman, I think,—objected. Buonaparte has vowelled them pretty well since then.

"If this phrase means picking one's name to pieces, how terribly has poor H-nn-h M-r- been treated during this Bristol controversy![1] Her health, always feeble, has given way to their ill-usage, and those who

[1] Hannah More had been bitterly attacked by a clergyman called Bere in connection with some schools she started. Mr. Bere's bishop came to her defence.

are near intimates tremble for the consequence.[1] We shall go to Bath next month, and then I will try to comfort her. A sister in affliction may have peculiar chance for success; but, I don't know how it is, I never was in affliction. *My* countenance, unlike that of old Hamlet's ghost, was more, much more in anger than in sorrow, and so grew less like a ghost, I do believe in proportion as my critics charged me with loss of youth and beauty. They had need be very young and handsome themselves to make such nonsense tolerated."

"No. 77 Pultney Street,
"*Tuesday, 17th March*, 1802.

"Has it been in your way to look at a Miss Baillie's Dramas written, not for the stage, but for purpose of tracing the progress of the passions? Her *Tragedy* on *Hatred* was deservedly admired three years ago . . . and called *De Montfort*.[2] She has now published a *Comedy* on *Hatred* very striking indeed, and possessing, in my mind, wonderful merit. Miss Hamilton wins all hearts in this town, which is full of showy talkers. . . . I get more conversation here than in London. Our modern *Plurality of Worlds* is much admired, and justly . . . my worst fear is lest, in these daring days of bold and unauthorized conjecture, some one should start out and go as far *below*, as Mr. Nares[3] has gone *above*, the old standard. We might then see

[1] The trembling was unnecessary, as Hannah More survived the "Blagdon controversy" for more than thirty years.

[2] *De Montfort* was produced by Kemble and Mrs. Siddons at Drury Lane in 1800.

[3] Edward Nares, D.D., author of *Plurality of Worlds*

printed George Psalmanazar's[1] speculative ideas concerning the souls of brutes, and have old Cicero rummaged for quotations. Mr. Piozzi's notion of modern music helps me to illustrate my own meaning. '*Variations* are very entertaining,' says he, 'but I like a quick return to the *subject*, which never should be too far forsaken.'"

"BRYNBELLA, *9th Jan.*, 1804.

"I am of your opinion that Bristol and its opulent environs are not as safe as the metropolis, though I hope dear Hannah More is premature with her packages. When the lists are drawn, however, and preparations for this grand tournament are made in the face of all Europe so, *something* must in honour be done by the challenger, who, if he does *any*thing, must do some *great* thing, or endure that disgrace which it seems his sole endeavour to shun. *The stage waits*, as they say to Mrs. Siddons when she is slow in changing her dress where characters require more toilettes than one. Well, if they come now, we shall be invaded by men with snow upon their helmets, as Nixon the Cheshire ideot predicted long ago.[2]

"BATH, *Thursday 21st Feb.*, 1805.

"Young Roscius's[3] premature powers attract uni-

[1] The French "Formosan" who gulled London for three or four years. After his confession he became a respectable hack-writer and gained the esteem of Johnson.

[2] Robert Nixon, a Cheshire idiot of the beginning of the seventeenth century, whose prophecies were published in 1714.

[3] William Henry West Betty (1791–1874), played Romeo at the age of twelve. He is said to have made £34,000 in fifty-six nights.

versal attention, and I suppose that if less than an angel had told *his* parents that a bulletin of that child's health should be necessary to quiet the anxiety of a metropolis for his safety, they would not have believed the prediction.

"Of Buonaparte's exaltation, still less appearance, still fewer traces could have been visible a dozen years ago; and how his family will support their new dignities remains yet to be seen.

"The Pope seems no more talked of. Is he gone home, or going? or will they set him down at Avignon, and secularize old Rome at once? *That* scheme is among the many one hears talked of.

"Mr Piozzi's state of health is all this while nearer my heart than any of these things; it is not a good state of health, certainly, where frequent agony and continual lameness both of hands and feet preclude all possibility of enjoyment, and render even consolation difficult. Yet has Mr. Piozzi tolerable appetite, and no worse spirits than such a state of life and limbs must necessarily produce . . . so we must be contented I think, and pity those who are worse off than ourselves."

"Brynbella, 1*st August*, 1805.

"A reading lady at Bath, not a writing lady, told me that she open'd an old book one day at an old friend's house, and found in it by mere accident whole pages of your predecessor Paley's Theology, particularly the passage about *finding a watch*.[1] She could

[1] Paley's *Evidences* and *Natural Theology* drew largely on the eighteenth century arguments against deism.

not tell me the title of the book, but thought it was a *gentleman's religion* she said, or the religion of a *gentleman*, or some such title, but people, coming in, she was shy of further examination. Can you guess what she *did* mean? I will answer for her veracity, *that* I would; and read nothing else but my Bible for as long as I have to live, unless it was your *Key*,[1] which first put such a thought into my head. My comfort is that *you* are young enough to be useful; and that every day sets you in some place whence you may more easily and with more power, as more dignity, dispense knowledge and practise virtue.

"Hannah More's hints[2] for the education of a young princess is I fear but little read and tasted, though a beautiful book; and attracts me oftener to open it (at least seldomer to shut it) than Mr. Roscoe's *Leo X.* If I were but one dozen years younger than I am, I would learn Hebrew."

"BRYNBELLA, 13*th Nov.*, 1811.

"Of Fray Gerundio[3] I never heard except from Baretti, who was always talking about him; and as veracity was never among Baretti's merits, it may very possibly be more nearly connected with the translator[4] than I was aware of. Preaching is however a favourite

[1] Dr. Gray's *Key to the Old Testament and the Apocrypha*, 1790.

[2] *Hints towards forming the Character of a Young Princess*, 1803—a work designed for the Princess Charlotte, who died in 1817.

[3] A picaresque romance, attacking the preaching friars, by José Francisco de Isla, 1758 and 1770.

[4] It was translated into English in 1772 by Thomas Nugent.

topic of ridicule among Spanish wits. There is a comedy, exceedingly laughable, by Calderon della Barca, called the *Devil turned Preacher*, which I used to read thirty years ago; but I have no books in that language here, so it fades away too fast from my mind. Old Macklin[1] used to say, there was a geography in humour: I am convinced there is one in oratory. That preaching which would impress a London congregation, would roll over our folks here and leave no trace: as the tail of the serpent comes nearer the mouth meanwhile, extremes meet in *everything*; and there is a rage for pulpit instruction that I did never observe in my younger days, but which marked the early periods of church history, and marks these late ones. There is likewise a visible disposition to inordinate vices not dreamed of forty years ago, but bearing strong resemblance to what one reads of in the first and second centuries. Knowledge increases too in a wonderful manner, but the science ends in a wonder after all. Witness the aeronauts, the galvanists, the vaccinators, and a long etcetera of philosophers who turn the flame downwards, and burning our diamonds to death, find them to be *charcoal*. Never was poor Nature so put to the *rack*, and never of course was she made to tell so many *lies*. The thing Fourcroy[2] says which best pleases *me* is, that of all our human anatomy, the brain holds out longest from decay. *Ainsi soit-il*."

[1] Charles Macklin is well entitled to the adjective. He died in 1797, a centenarian.

[2] The celebrated French chemist who died in 1809.

"BATH, *27th Nov.*, 1814.

"Streatham Park was worth anyone's seeing six months ago. Upon some threats concerning dilapidation, I set heartily to work, new fronted the house, new fenced the whole of the 100 acres completely round; repaired stables, out-buildings, barns which I had no use for; and hothouses which are a scourge to my purse, a millstone round my neck. 6500*l.* sterling just covers my expenses, of which 4000*l.* are paid; but poor old dowager as I am, the remainder kept me marvellous low in pocket, and drives me into a nutshell here at Bath, where I used to live gay and grand in Pultney Street. Direct, however, Post Office, when you are kind enough to write, and I shall get your letter. Count Lieven is my tenant, and pays me liberally, but so he should; for his dependants smoke their tobacco in my nice new beds, and play a thousand tricks that keep my steward, who I have left there, in perpetual agony. I am famous for *tenants* you know. So much for self.

"Lord Byron was such a favourite with the women. We all agreed that he might throw his handkerchief; and I rejoyce so pretty and pleasing a lady picks it up. I knew his grandmother most intimately, Sophia Trevanion, Admiral Byron's lady;[1] and she was a favourite with Doctor Johnson. He would have been glad that her grandson was a poet, and a poet he is, in every sense of the word: 'Au moins il ne manque que *la pauvretè* pour l'être,' as some one said of a gentleman painter in France many years ago."

[1] See p. 184.

"No. 8 Gay Street, Bath,
"*Fryday, 27th Sept.* 1816.

"Well! now am I returned to the living world again. What do I hear? and what do I see? I hear of dear Doctor Gray's new book [1] from every creature that can hold one; and I see Buonaparte's fine carriage driven up my street by a surly-looking coachman preceded by a showy cuirassier, in the armour he wore at Waterloo. First of the book however, because *that* captivates all hearts: the other appanage is itself a captive. The chapter treating of Josephus is the general favourite; how much more must it be mine, who have been myself upon the ground trodden by St. Paul and him. Will you laugh at me for fretting that the Old Prediction of Ocyrrhoe the Centauress is omitted? The expressions are *so* strong.

"'Aspicit infantem, totique salutifer orbi
Cresce puer, dixit; tibi se mortalia sæpe
Corpora debebunt: animas tibi reddere ademptas
Fas erit.'

"And again,

"'Eque Deo Corpus fies exangue: Deusque,
Qui modo corpus eras; et *bis* tua fata novabis.' [2]

"Poets do oft prove prophets, as Shakespeare says of jesters. I have, however, passed my last quarter in a region where neither poesy nor prophecy were

[1] *Connexion between the Sacred Writings and the Literature of the Jewish and Heathen Authors*, 1816.
[2] Ovid, *Meta.* ii. 637.

thought on, except Nixon the Chesshire fool's prediction [1] that—

"'When kings are dismay'd and princes betray'd,
Our landlords shall stand with their hats in their hand
And beg of the tenants to take their land.'

"My affairs here being all settled, Streatham Park disposed of, and my poor steward, Leak, being dead, I have got a pretty neat house and decent establishment for a widowed lady, and shall exist a true Bath Cat for the short remainder of my life, hearing from Salusbury [2] of his increasing family, and learning from the libraries in this town all the popular topics—Turks, Jews, and Ex-Emperor Buonaparte, remembering still that now my debts are all paid, and my income set free, which was so long sequestered to pay repairs of a house I was not rich enough to inhabit, and could not persuade my daughters to take from me—

"'Malice domestic, foreign levy,—nothing
Can touch him further';

as Macbeth says of Duncan when he is dead. Things will at worst last *my* time I suppose."

"BATH, 19*th Nov.*, 1817.

"My dear Doctor Gray's kind letter arrived the same day as the Queen;[3] and such a day of gayety and triumph Bath certainly never did witness. Now, Lord be praised, and let us keep our wits! was *my* exclamation; the delight of the people was boundless.

[1] See p. 289. [2] Mr. Piozzi's nephew.
[3] Queen Charlotte died the following year.

Everybody was on the *alerte*; numbers of women (who had been presented) left their names, and some had a notion she would send for others who did *not*. Madame D'Arblaye, ci-devant Miss Burney, was believed by many to have a claim on her remembrance; and some prepared to sing, and some to read, and some to talk. The illumination was more gaudy than I ever saw London exhibit; and a prodigious expense was incurred by subscription to pillars, arches, and I know not what beside. The mayor and corporation put on new dresses, the cooks prepared a magnificent repast, and Death[1] uninvited came to the dinner. The Duke of Clarence really could not articulate the fatal words that extinguished hope and merriment; he threw the paper to Lord Camden and left the room,—it was empty in five minutes. All this in one short week!

"This is Monday; and no news comes to Bath, so we invent ad libitum. The favourite fable of the day is that Prince Leopold has shot himself; and truly if any man is to be driven distracted by the occurrences of this life, forgetting for a moment that it is merely a passage to the other, his wits *may* unsettle surrounded by such irritating circumstances."

"BATH, 29*th Dec.*, 1817.

"My dear Doctor Gray speaks so kindly of my youthful energies, I must really take out a new pen

[1] The Princess Charlotte, only child of George IV., married Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg in 1816 and died 19th November 1817.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

After painting by
SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS

to tell him—what alone we all tell to each other—that the Queen is gone. I took some little pains to find out who she spoke freely with and in private; and have reason to think it was Madame D'Arblaye, daughter to old Dr. Burney, and wife of the Republican general, who ran hither, sdeigning submission, as Satan says in the *Paradise Lost*, either to Louis dixhuit, or to Buonaparte. That lady, although we are on visiting terms, was not likely, you know, to forward the reception of H. L. P., against whom she raised the grand cry for marrying a foreigner; and delicacy would not permit me to squeeze among the crowds—I must not call them rabble—who molested Her Majesty in the Pump Room. The pressure there was, I am told, very offensive indeed; but she behaved sweetly to them all, and seems to have succeeded in pleasing every creature."

LETTERS TO SIR JAMES FELLOWES, ETC.

To Sir James Fellowes

"BLAKE'S HOTEL, *Monday, July 31st*, 1815.

"MY dear Sir James Fellowes's friendly heart will feel pleased that the spasms he drove away returned no more: altho' you were really scarce out of the street before I received a cold short note from Mr. Merrik Hoare, who married one of the sisters,[1] to say that Lord Keith, who married the other, wished to decline purchasing; so here I am no whit nearer disposing of Streatham Park than when I sate still in Bath. Money spent and nothing done: but bills thronging in every hour. Mr. Ward, the solicitor, has sent his demand of 116*l.* 18*s.* 3*d.* I think, for expences concerning Salusbury's marriage. I call that the *felicity* bill: those which produce nothing but infelicity, all refer to Streatham, of course. But you ran away without your epigram translated so much apropos:

"'Créanciers! maudite canaille,
Commissaire, huissiers et recors;
Vous aurez bien le diable au corps
Si vous emportez la muraille.'

[1] Sophia Thrale.

"Creditors! ye cursed crew
Bailiffs, blackguards, not a few:
Look well around, for here's my all:
You've left me nothing but this wall,
And sure to give each dev'l his due,
This wall's too strong for them or you.

"I must make the most of my house now they have left it on my hands, must I not! *may* I not? and, like my countrymen at Waterloo, sell my *life* as dear as I can. Oh terque quaterque beati! those who fell at the battle of St. Jean, when compared to the miseries of Cadiz and Xeres; and oh, happy Sir James Fellowes! whose book,[1] well disseminated, will save us from these horrors, or from an accumulation of them; when the Cambridge fever shall break out again among the Lincolnshire fens, if we have unfavourable seasons. The best years of *my* temporal existence—I don't mean the happiest; but the best for powers of improvement, observation, etc.—were past in what is now Park Street, Southwark, but then Deadman's Place; so called because of the pest houses which were established there in the Great Plague of London. From clerks, and *blackguards not a few*, I learn'd there that Long Lane, Kent Street, and one other place of which the name has slipt my memory, were exempt from infection during the whole time of general sickness, and that their safety was imputed to its being the residence of tanners. I am, however, now convinced from your

[1] *Reports of the Pestilential Disorders of Andalusia, etc., in* 1804 (1815).

book, that it was seclusion, not *tan*, that preserved them. And do not, dear Sir, despise your sibyl's prediction: for that God's judgments are abroad, it is vain to deny; and though France will support the heaviest weight of them till her phial is run out; our proximity, and fond inclination to connect with her, may, and naturally *will* produce direful effects in many ways upon the morals, the purses, and the health of Great Britain.

"Do you observe that there is already a pretender started to the Bourbon throne? You cannot (as I can) recollect in the very early days of the Revolution, that Abbé Sieyes declared he had saved the *real Dauphin* from Robertspierre, and substituted another baby of equal age to endure the fury of the homicides. Some of us believed the tale, and some, the greater number, laughed at those who *did* believe it. But an intelligent Italian, since dead, assured me that the last Pope, Braschi,[1] believed it; and marked the youth in consequence of that belief, with a Fleur-de-Lys upon his leg. Whether the young man described in the newspaper as seizing the Duchess d'Angoulesme, is that person or another: or whether some fellow under the influence of national insanity, imagines himself the Dauphin; he is likely enough to disturb them and divide their friends. Such times by the violence of fermentation produce extraordinary virtues; but your incomparable Don Diego Alvarez de la Fuente[2] would never have had his excellence of character properly

[1] Pius VI.

[2] Governor of Cadiz while Sir James Fellowes was there investigating the pestilence in 1815.

appreciated, had you not been the man to hand his fame down to posterity. Æneas would have been forgotten but for Virgil.

"I am not yet aware that any suspicion of promoting contagion during the fearful moments you describe lighted on the Jews: the propensity they show to deal in old clothes makes it very likely that they should now and then propagate infectious diseases among their Christian persecutors, but I hope those days are coming fast to an end; when France has been disposed of, *their turn will come*. You will find a kind word or two for them in the first chapter of my second volume (of *Retrospection*) but the last chapter in the first volume is my favourite, and should be read before the short dissertation on the Hebrews for twenty reasons. I hope you like my preface, and find it *modest enough*, tho' the critics had no mercy on my *sauciness*.

"Well! now the rest of this letter shall be like other people's letters, and say how hot the streets are, and how disagreeable London is in the summer months; and how sincerely happy I should have been to pass the next six or seven weeks at Sidmouth, but that,—— Oh, such speeches are *not* like other people's letters at all: but that,—— I have not (with an income of 2000*l.* a year) 5*l.* to spend on myself, so encumber'd am I with debts and taxes. Leak says he must pay 40*l.* Property Tax, now, this minute. He is a good creature, and will be a bitter loss to his poor mistress, whenever we part; although the keeping him, and his wife, and his child, is dreadful, is it not? Since, however, in mental as in bodily plagues,

despondency brings on ruin faster than it would come of itself:

> "'What yet remains? but well what's left to use,
> And keep good humour still, whate'er we lose.'

"The battle with Anderdon will be fought to-morrow. I make sure of losing the *field*; my generals are unskilful. Direct Mrs. Piozzi, Bath."

To Sir James Fellowes

"BATH, *August 24th*, 1815.

"I could not recollect poor dear Garrick's verses yesterday, when we were talking on the subject: although *they* were made in the library at Streatham Park and, by Johnson's approbation and consent, substituted instead of Murphy's, which he thought pedantic.

"'Ye fair married dames who so often deplore
That a lover once blessed, is a lover no more;
Attend to my counsel, nor blush to be taught,
That prudence must cherish what beauty has caught.

'Use the man whom you wed like your fav'rite guitar.
Though there's music in both, they are both apt to jar;
How tuneful and soft from a delicate touch;
Not handled too roughly, nor played on too much.

'The sparrow and linnet will feed from your hand,
Grow tame by caressing, and come at command;
Exert with your husbands the same happy skill,
For hearts, like your birds, may be tamed to your will.

'Be gay and good-humoured, complying, and kind,
Turn the chief of your care from your face to your mind,
Attractions so pleasing, resistless will prove,
And Hymen shall rivet the fetters of Love.'

Murphy's Song:

"'Attend all ye fair, and I'll tell ye the art,
To bind every fancy with ease in your chains;
To hold in soft fetters the conjugal heart,
And banish from Hymen his doubts and his pains.

'When Juno accepted the cestus of Love,
At first she was handsome, she charming became;
It taught her with skill the soft passions to move,
To kindle at once, and to keep up the flame.

'Thence flows the gay chat more than reason that charms,
The eloquent blush that can beauty improve;
The fond sigh, the sweet look, the soft touch that alarms;
With the tender disdain—that renewal of love.

'Ye fair! take the cestus, and trust to its power,
The mind unaccomplished, mere features are vain;
When wit and good humour enliven each hour,
The Loves, Joys, and Graces will walk in your train.'"

To Sir James Fellowes

"BATH, *Wednesday, 27th September*, 1815.

"I have lived to witness very great wonders, and am told that Bramah the great mechanic[1] is in expectation of perfecting the guidance of an air balloon, so as to exhibit in an almost miraculous manner upon Westminster Bridge next Spring. I saw one of the first—the *very* first, Mongolfier, I believe,[2]—go up from the Luxembourg Gardens at Paris; and in about an hour after, expressing my anxiety whether Pilâtre de Rosier and his friend Charles[3] were gone, meaning of course to what part of France they would be carried, a grave man made reply: 'Je crois, Madame, qu'ils sont allés, ces Messieurs-là, pour voir le lieu où les vents se forment.'

"What fellows Frenchmen are! and always have been. I long for your brother's new account of them, and if I could turn the figures from seventy-four to forty-seven, I would certainly go and see them myself: in a less hazardous vehicle than an air balloon."

To Sir James Fellowes

"BATH, *Tuesday night, 3rd Oct.*, 1815.

"With regard to public matters, I think Maximilian, the witty Emperor of Germany, was not far from right

[1] Joseph Bramah, the famous Yorkshire inventor, died in the previous year.

[2] Stephen and Joseph Montgolfier raised the first balloons in 1783.

[3] Pilâtre de Rosiers was the first to ascend in the car of a balloon in 1783. Professor Charles was another pioneer.

when he said that *he*, like Agamemnon of old, was Rex Regum (King of Kings); the King of France, Rex Asinorum (King of Asses); the King of England, Rex Diabolorum (King of Devils)—though he had not heard of the Irish mutineers of *our day*: the King of Spain, Rex Hominum (King of Men). I hope they will verify the appellation and behave like men and gentlemen. Of dear Cervantes' merit, you must know most, and those who do so, must most value him. I believe there is no writer in Europe as popular, no not Shakespear himself, who is justly the idol of his own country: while the Spanish hero is hero of *every* country: no nation that does not swarm with prints, and resound with stories of Don Quixote; and 'tis very likely I am quoting my own book when I say so, but there is no remembering the crowded figures clustered together in *Retrospection*.[1] We will talk of the name-book [2] when I am grown rich; it will do nothing for me till I don't want it, and *that* day I purpose to see on the 25th of next July, if not hindered by Los Hatos, and cramped in my noble exertions. Nine months, is it not, to July? Well! I have carried many a heavy burden for nine months, and why not a load of debt? 'tis a new sort of burthen, but Leak writes me word that Gillow's bill has many charges in it that cannot be supported, so if he can heave off a *hundred* weight, things will run better, and 'tis only following your example about the vexatious tooth—bearing, and forbearing, and wearing the misery out.

"Our theatre is open, and I saw the new opera dancers

[1] See p. 2.

[2] Perhaps a revised edition of her *British Synonymy*, 1794.

from Mrs. Dimond's[1] box. La Prima Donna is the smallest creature I ever saw, that was not a dwarf; her husband a Colossus of a fellow, and the waltz they dance together, just the very oddest thing I ever saw in my life. We were talking here one morning, if you recollect, with Miss Williams, of these Ballerinas, and the ideas they intended to excite. The present set excite *no* ideas except of dry admiration for the astonishing difficulties they perform, and some serious fears lest they should break their slender limbs in the performance. Holding out one leg and one arm in a parallel line, is destructive of all grace; and when, after springing up to a prodigious height, they come down on the point of one toe—nothing can exceed our wonder at its possibility, except one's joy that they escape in safety. Music and dancing are no longer what they were, and I grow less pleased with both every hour—

> "'Year chases year, decay pursues decay,
> Still drops some joy from with'ring life away.'

"But do not let us teize dear Miss Fellowes to write; it only worries *her*, and, whilst I am conscious of it, cannot delight *me*. While secure of a friend's affectionate regard, I abhor dunning them for letters; when my heart tells me that their kindness is growing cold, and feels weary of keeping up an uninteresting correspondence, 'tis then that silence is a mute that strangles.

"We have an old beauty come here to Bath—you scarce can remember her—one of the very *very* much admired women, Lady Stanley. Poor thing! she went

[1] Wife of the co-proprietor of the Bath theatre.

to France and Italy early in life, learned *les manières* and *les tournures*, and how gay a thing it was to despise her husband, who was completely even with her—

"'In youth she conquer'd with so wild a rage,
As left her scarce a subject in her age:
For foreign glories, foreign joys, to roam,
No thought of peace, or happiness at home.'

"Her fortune, however, as an independent heiress, she held fast; and her wit and pleasantry seem but little impaired; but the loss of health sent her here, and she wonders to see mine so good, so indeed do I; but we were no puling family; my father, both my grandfathers, and three uncles, all died suddenly, which renders me more watchful of course. Never mind; Pope says,

"'Act well your part, there all the honour lies.'"

To Sir James Fellowes

"BATH, 10*th Oct.*, 1815.

"Such letters would make *anybody* well. I will implicitly follow the advice of my incomparable friend, and I will not advertise Streatham Park till you approve the measure. Alas, dear Sir, my wish is to conciliate, not provoke them. Lord North's maxim, 'Amicitiæ sempiternæ, inimicitiæ placabiles,'[1] is the best in the world; and they will perhaps one day tell you that I have always followed it. Meanwhile, I will not swear that the cross winds of domestic life have

[1] Best known by Christopher North's rendering in connection with his earlier attacks on Leigh Hunt: "The animosities are mortal: the humanities live for ever."

forborne to injure my tackling, and if I can now get home under jury masts, how thankful ought I to be! Apropos to *jury* masts, what can be the meaning of such an awkward word? I have not a dictionary in the room, but I dare say they mean mâts de *durer*. Masts that will just serve and *last* but for a short time. Now if I am the worse for the musket shot of this warring world, how reasonable is it to expect that *you* should have suffered, who have been so exposed to its heaviest artillery! Let us never have done rejoycing that you are returned to the bosom of your family, and permitted to enjoy *their* happiness which you have unremittingly preferred to your own.

"*I* was selfish, *once*, and *but* once in my life; and though they lost nothing by my second marriage, my friends (as one's relations are popularly called) never could be persuaded to forgive it; was not it always so? Your Spanish Bible, in the eighteenth chapter of Saint Matthew's Gospel, shows us how to obtain pardon by applying to the *right place and person*, not to our *cruel* fellow servants. . . .

"So here is reciprocation of confidence, and a confession no one but your kind self could deserve—or indeed comprehend. . . .

"I remember an awkward Irish Miss once, when it was the fashion to give sentimental toasts, making us all look silly, because the men laughed so, who loved rough merriment, when in reply to their request of a sentiment, she made answer, 'What we think on most, Sir, and talk on least.' Mrs. Hoare[1] and I both would *feel* that to be Streatham Park.

[1] Her daughter, Sophia Thrale.

To Sir James Fellowes

"*Tuesday Night, 24th Oct.*, 1815.

"The Anecdotes of Doctor Johnson were begun at Milan, where we first heard of his death, and so written on, from milestone to milestone, till, arriving at Leghorn, we shipped them off to England. Mr. Thrale had always advised me to treasure up some of the valuable pearls that fell from his (Johnson's) lips, in conversation; and Mr. Piozzi was so indignant at the treatment I met with from his executors, that he spirited me up to give my own account of Doctor Johnson, in my own way; and not send to them the detached bits which they required with such assumed superiority and distance of manner, although most of them were intimates of the house till they thought it deserted for ever. I think we must not tell your dear father that his friend Bennet Langton was one of them. If we do, he will not say as Dr. Johnson did,[1]

"'Sit anima mea cum Langtono.'

But my marriage had offended them all, beyond hope of pardon.

"Now judge my transport, and my husband's when at Rome we received letters saying the book was bought with such avidity, that Cadell had not one copy left, when the King sent for it at ten o'clock at night, and he was forced to beg one from a friend, to supply his Majesty's impatience, who sate up all night reading it. Samuel Lysons, Esq., Keeper of the Records in the Tower,[2] then a law student in the Temple, made my

[1] Boswell, *sub anno* 1784.

[2] See p. 249.

bargain with the bookseller, from whom, on my return, I received 300*l.*, a sum unexampled in those days for so small a volume.

"And here, my dear Sir, is a truly-told anecdote of yours and your charming family's gratefully attached,

"H. L. P."

To Sir James Fellowes

"BATH, 30*th Oct.*, 1815.

"The next best thing to shaking a friend by the *hand* is seeing his *hand*writing. I am happy to read yours, and most earnestly hope you will keep close to the house till better days. The ladies will have sad weather to travel in. General Garslin did me a great deal of honour, and deserved some amusement in payment for his trouble in finding the house.

"But I have had a nice dish of flattery dressed to my taste this morning. That grave Mr. Lucas brought his son here, that he might see the *first woman in England*—forsooth. So I am now grown one of the curiosities of Bath, it seems, and *one of the Antiquities*.

"This evening a chair will carry me to Mrs. Holroyd's,[1] to meet two other females, whom Richardson taught the town to call old tabbies, attended, says he, by young *grimalkins*. Now that's wrong; because they are young tabbies, and when grown grey are *gris malkins*, I suppose. Is not this fine nonsense for the first woman? Prima Donna! in good time!"

[1] Sarah Martha Holroyd, sister of Lord Sheffield.

To Sir James Fellowes

"*30th October*, 1815.

"If dear Sir James Fellowes still continues under discipline, this anecdote of Hogarth and of his little friend may amuse him. My father and he were very intimate, and he often dined with us. One day when he had done so, my aunt and a groupe of young cousins came in the afternoon,—evenings were earlier things than they are now, and 3 o'clock the common dinner-hour. I had got a then new thing I suppose, which was called Game of the Goose,[1] and felt earnest that we children might be allowed a round table to play at it, but was half afraid of my uncle's and my father's grave looks. Hogarth said, good-humouredly, "*I* will come, my dears, and play at it with you." Our joy was great, and the sport began under my management and direction. The pool rose to five shillings, a fortune to us monkeys, and when I won it, I capered for delight.

"But the next time we went to Leicester Fields, Mr. Hogarth was painting, and bid me sit to him; 'And now look here,' said he, 'I am doing this for you. You are not fourteen years old yet, I think, but you will be twenty-four, and this portrait will then be like you. 'Tis the lady's last stake; see how she hesitates between her money and her honour. Take you care; I see an ardour for play in your eyes and in your heart; don't indulge it. I shall give you this picture

[1] Goldsmith's "Royal game of Goose" in the *Description of an Author's Bedchamber*. It was a game resembling backgammon.

as a warning, because I love you now, you are so good a girl.' In a fortnight's time after that visit we went out of town. He died somewhat suddenly, I believe, and I never saw my poor portrait again; till, going to Fonthill many, many years afterward, I met it there, and Mr. Piozzi observed the likeness when I was showing him the fine house, then deserted by Mr. Beckford. The summer before last it was exhibited in Pall Mall as the property of Lord Charlemont. I asked Mrs. Hoare,[1] who was admiring it, if she ever saw any person it resembled. She said no, unless it might once have been like me, and we turned away to look at something else.

"With regard to play, I have been always particular in avoiding it, so that I scarce know whether the inclination ever subsisted or not. The scene he drew will certainly remind any one of poor H. L. P., and no one but yourself knows the story.

"But I must tell you how well your dear father is, and how heartily I made him laugh this morning at one of my comical stories, true as the day, which I heard a silly lady in my own country two or three years ago ask me quite suddenly before a room full of company, to tell her; 'for,' says she, 'you know Mrs. Piozzi does understand everything; what bone her son broke at the battle of Talavera.' This was *too* hard a question; but the lady went on: 'No, no,' continued she, 'not hard to Mrs. Piozzi. Louisa, you lost the letter very provokingly which had the fine word in it; and now you laugh, you ill-natured thing, because I can't recollect it, but Mrs. Piozzi will know in a

[1] See p. 308.

FANNY KEMBLE

After painting by
SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS

minute.' Turning to me: 'It was one of your fine words, I say, and very like fable-book.' 'I have,' said I, 'heard that Mr. Morgan's horse fell upon him, and perhaps broke the fibula, or small bone of his master's leg.' 'There, there!' cries out the lady; 'I told you Mrs. Piozzi would know it at once.'"

To Sir James Fellowes

"*Sunday, 26th November*, 1815.

"We all remembered you at the Lutwyches last Thursday, where the galanterie of the master of the house was quite the prettiest thing presented on the occasion. With one dying marigold, these lines:

> "'The gift of him whose heart can't vary,
> How paradoxical! Behold!
> Having no gold to give my Mary,
> I here present *this marygold*.'

They received my fleurs and fleurettes very obligingly, and shewed my worked fly, finely mounted as a fire-screen. Well! all that is politeness, is it not? a strong polish, over which everything glides and rolls and appears to make no impression, but if you look closely you will discern afterwards a lasting stain. Time's daughters (the days of the year) like the daughters of man, are deceitful; while young and in their papa's house, they flatter and promise the pleasures of next July to one confiding lover, a prize in the lottery to another: but see them come out, wrinkled and roughened with what each of them calls unforeseen vexations; their votaries turn away, not as they should do, to mansions beyond their control; but looking

back, make love to a younger sister, and trust another day.

"Yesterday did better; Mrs. Holroyd's party: we were a choice set indeed. But she had unluckily asked talkers to play the part of hearers, while Mrs. Lysons sung, and Mrs. Twiss[1] read. So one said the selection of songs was a dull one; another thought it was foolish to be listening to *Macbeth* in a room, when we had so lately seen it represented with every additional assistance on a stage. I persuaded her to take up Milton, and try what could be done with the second book; her sister read the fourth book, I remember, at Doctor Whalley's about five or six years ago, and Sir William Weller Pepys[2] made this impromptu while she was speaking, repeating it the moment she had done:

"'When Siddons reads from Milton's page,
Then sound and sense unite;
Her varying tones our hearts engage
With exquisite delight:
So well those varying tones accord
With his seraphic strain;
We hear, we feel, in every word,
His angels speak again.'"

To Sir James Fellowes

"*5th November*, 1815.

"I send my dear Sir James Fellowes the *Synonymes*[3] that he may finish with the best thing I ever

[1] Fanny Kemble, a sister of Mrs. Siddons. [2] See p. 206.

[3] On this work (*The British Synonymy*), published in 1794, Gifford was very "savage and tartarly." "Mrs. Piozzi brought

wrote; I send likewise my defence of *his* favourite *Retrospection*: they were very civil to the *Synonymy*, and there was a fine eulogium on the string of words, calling over the meaning of crush, overwhelm, ruin, in the first volume. I have marked very few passages, but hope you will like many."

To Sir James Fellowes

"*Wednesday, 22nd May*, 1816.

"My dear Sir James has broken the Mum at last; and I will now tell him how we are hesitating between a convenient house on the Queen's Parade, or pretty No. 8, Gay Street, which is particularly inconvenient for the servants below stairs. Either of them ought to content me well enough after how I have been living — a common expression, but infamous bad English.

"Apropos, Charles Kemble has been here acting; and in some part of a comedy written by Murphy, said, 'We are like Cymon and Iphigĕnīa in Dryden's *Fables*.' The ladies stared, but the scholars said he was right; and I said it were better be wrong than so pedantic, for 'tis always called Iphigēnĭa in common use. Mr. Lutwyche held with the wise men, and he, you know, is a good prosodist. I quoted Pope's *Homer*, 9th book,

"'Laodice, and Iphigēnia fair,
And bright Crysothemis with golden hair.'

---

to the task an utter incapability of defining a single term in the language."

'Oh!' said Mr. Mangin, 'Pope is no firm authority;[1] he calls the wife of Pluto Prōserpine, as in colloquial chat, when writing his fine ode on St. Cecilia's Day. But old Milton disclaimed such barbarism; he calls her Prŏsērpĭna, as in the Greek.' We all appealed to Falconer; dear Sir James was too far away. I know not the success of our appeal yet."

To Sir James Fellowes

"BATH, 30*th May*, 1816.

"MY DEAR SIR,—. . . I will be careful about sea bathing. Dr. Gibbes bid me beware of the reaction, but what can one do towards keeping such thing at a distance? Cowper says, you know, and truly and sweetly:

> "'Fate steals along with silent tread,
> Most dangerous when least we dread;
> Frowns in the storm with angry brow,
> But in the sunshine strikes the blow.'

Now, don't you believe me low spirited; few people ever had such uniformly good spirits. Did I tell you I had saved Murphy[2] from the general wreck? and that Mr. Watson Taylor wrote after me to beg him for 157*l.* 10*s.*; but I am no longer poor, and when I was, there ought surely to be some difference made between fidelity and unkindness. When B——s

[1] Mr. Mangin (the author of *Piozziana*, 1833) had no reason for condemning Pope. The line can be scanned without mispronouncing *Iphigenia*.

[2] Portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds, painted for the library at Streatham.

(Burneys) were treacherous, and Baretti boisterous, against poor unoffending H. L. P., dear Murphy was faithful found, among the faithless faithful only he:

> "'He, like his muse, no mean retreating made,
> But follow'd faithful to the silent shade.'

Equally attached to both my husbands, he lived with us till he could in a manner live no longer; and his portrait is now on the easel, with that of Mr. Thrale, coming to Bath; my mother, whom both of them adored, keeping them company."

APPENDIX

LETTERS BETWEEN DR. JOHNSON AND MRS. THRALE REGARDING HER MARRIAGE TO MR. PIOZZI

I

"BATH, *June* 30.

"MY DEAR SIR,—The enclosed is a circular letter which I have sent to all the guardians, but our friendship demands somewhat more; it requires that I should beg your pardon for concealing from you a connexion which you must have heard of by many, but I suppose never believed. Indeed, my dear Sir, it was concealed only to save us both needless pain; I could not have borne to reject that counsel it would have killed me to take, and I only tell it you now because all is irrevocably settled and out of your power to prevent. I will say, however, that the dread of your disapprobation has given me some anxious moments, and though perhaps I am become by many privations the most independent woman in the world, I feel as if acting without a parent's consent till you write kindly to

"Your faithful servant."

II

CIRCULAR LETTER

"SIR,—As one of the executors of Mr. Thrale's will and guardian to his daughters, I think it my duty to acquaint

you that the three eldest left Bath last Friday for their own house at Brighthelmstone in company with an amiable friend, Miss Nicholson, who has sometimes resided with us here, and in whose society they may, I think, find some advantages and certainly no disgrace. I waited on them to Salisbury, Wilton, etc., and offered to attend them to the seaside myself, but they preferred this lady's company to mine, having heard that Mr. Piozzi is coming back from Italy, and judging perhaps by our past friendship and continued correspondence that his return would be succeeded by our marriage.

"I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servant.

"BATH, *June* 30, 1784."

III

"MADAM,—If I interpret your letter right, you are ignominiously married: if it is yet undone, let us *once* more *talk*[1] together. If you have abandoned your children and your religion, God forgive your wickedness; if you have forfeited your fame and your country, may your folly do no further mischief. If the last act is yet to do, I who have loved you, esteemed you, reverenced you, and *served you*,[1] I who long thought you the first of womankind, entreat that, before your fate is irrevocable, I may once more see you. I was, I once was, Madam, most truly yours,

"SAM. JOHNSON.

"*July* 2, 1784.

"I will come down if you permit it."

IV

"*July* 4, 1784.

"SIR,—I have this morning received from you so rough a letter in reply to one which was both tenderly and respectfully written, that I am forced to desire the conclusion of a correspondence which I can bear to continue no longer. The birth of my second husband is not meaner than that of

[1] The four words which I have printed in italics are indistinctly written, and cannot be satisfactorily made out. (Hayward.)

my first; his sentiments are not meaner; his profession is not meaner, and his superiority in what he professes acknowledged by all mankind. It is want of fortune, then, that is ignominious; the character of the man I have chosen has no other claim to such an epithet. The religion to which he has been always a zealous adherent will, I hope, teach him to forgive insults he has not deserved; mine will, I hope, enable me to bear them at once with dignity and patience. To hear that I have forfeited my fame is indeed the greatest insult I ever yet received. My fame is as unsullied as snow, or I should think it unworthy of him who must henceforth protect it.

"I write by the coach the more speedily and effectually to prevent your coming hither. Perhaps by my fame (and I hope it is so) you mean only that celebrity which is a consideration of a much lower kind. I care for that only as it may give pleasure to my husband and his friends.

"Farewell, dear Sir, and accept my best wishes. You have always commanded my esteem, and long enjoyed the fruits of a friendship never infringed by one harsh expression on my part during twenty years of familiar talk. Never did I oppose your will, or control your wish; nor can your unmerited severity itself lessen my regard; but till you have changed your opinion of Mr. Piozzi, let us converse no more. God bless you."

V

"London, *July* 8, 1784.

"Dear Madam,—What you have done, however I may lament it, I have no pretence to resent, as it has not been injurious to me: I therefore breathe out one sigh more of tenderness, perhaps useless, but at least sincere.

"I wish that God may grant you every blessing, that you may be happy in this world for its short continuance, and eternally happy in a better state; and whatever I can contribute to your happiness I am very ready to repay, for that kindness which soothed twenty years of a life radically wretched.

"Do not think slightly of the advice I now presume to offer. Prevail upon Mr. Piozzi to settle in England: you

may live here with more dignity than in Italy, and with more security; your rank will be higher, and your fortune more under your own eye. I desire not to detail all my reasons, but every argument of prudence and interest is for England, and only some phantoms of imagination seduce you to Italy.

"I am afraid, however, that my counsel is vain, yet I have eased my heart by giving it.

"When Queen Mary took the resolution of sheltering herself in England, the Archbishop of St. Andrews, attempting to dissuade her, attended on her journey; and when they came to the irremeable stream that separated the two kingdoms, walked by her side into the water, in the middle of which he seized her bridle, and with earnestness proportioned to her danger and his own affection pressed her to return. The Queen went forward.—If the paralled reaches thus far, may it go no farther.—The tears stand in my eyes.

"I am going into Derbyshire, and hope to be followed by your good wishes, for I am, with great affection,

"Your, etc.

"Any letters that come for me hither will be sent me." [1]

[1] In a memorandum on this letter, she says:—"I wrote him a very kind and affectionate farewell." (Hayward.)

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